STORY BY KYO SHIRODAIRA
ART BY CHASHIBA KATASE

IN/SPECTRE

3

IN/SPECTRE

3

STORY: KYO SHIRODAIRA
MANGA: CHASHIBA KATASE

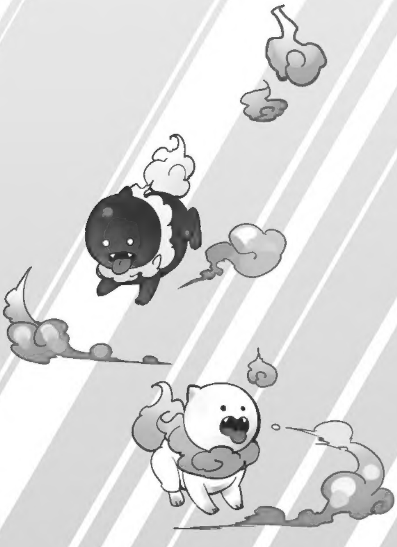
NOVEL VERSION CHARACTER DESIGNS
HIRO KIYOHARA

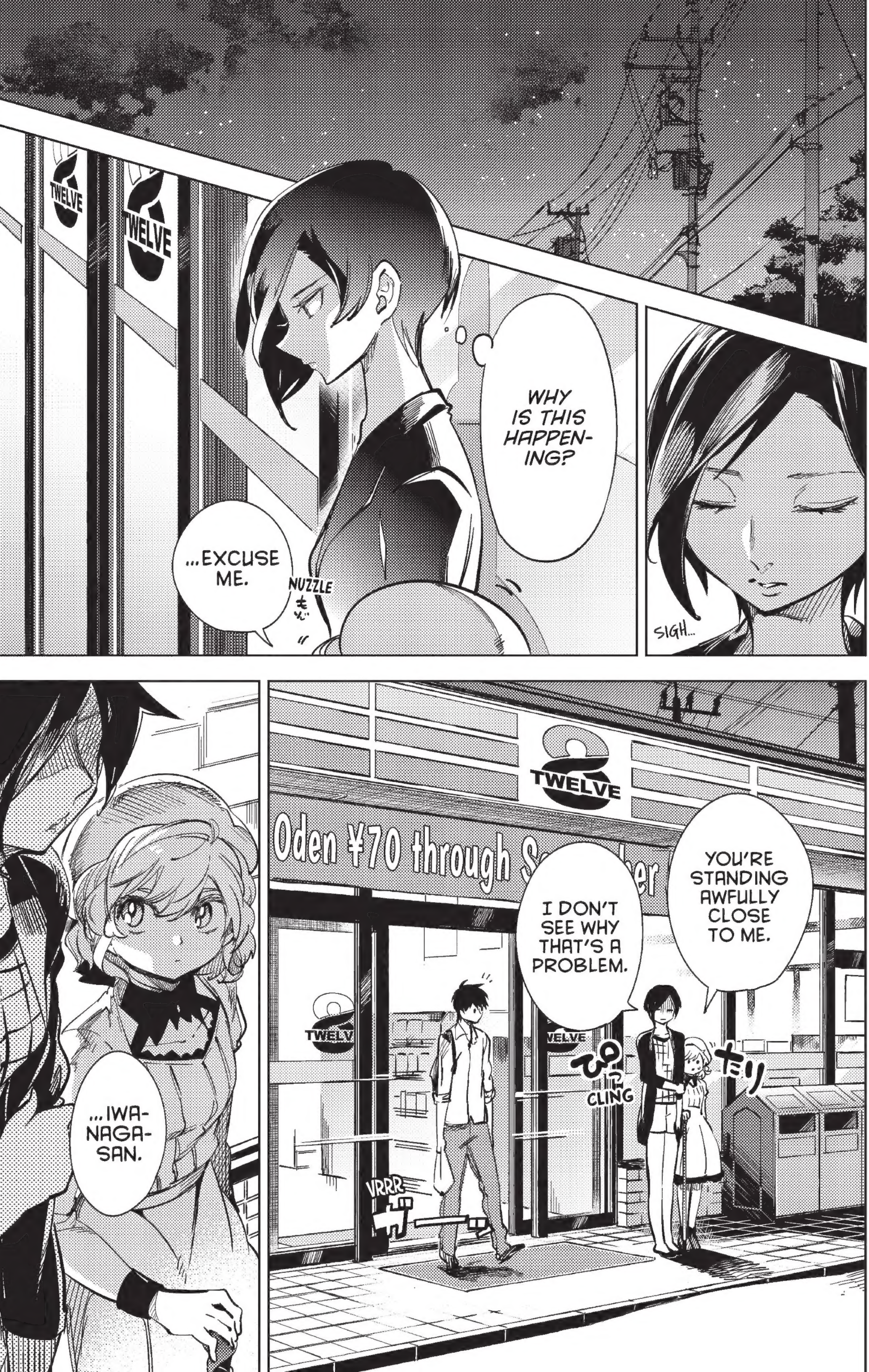
CONTENTS

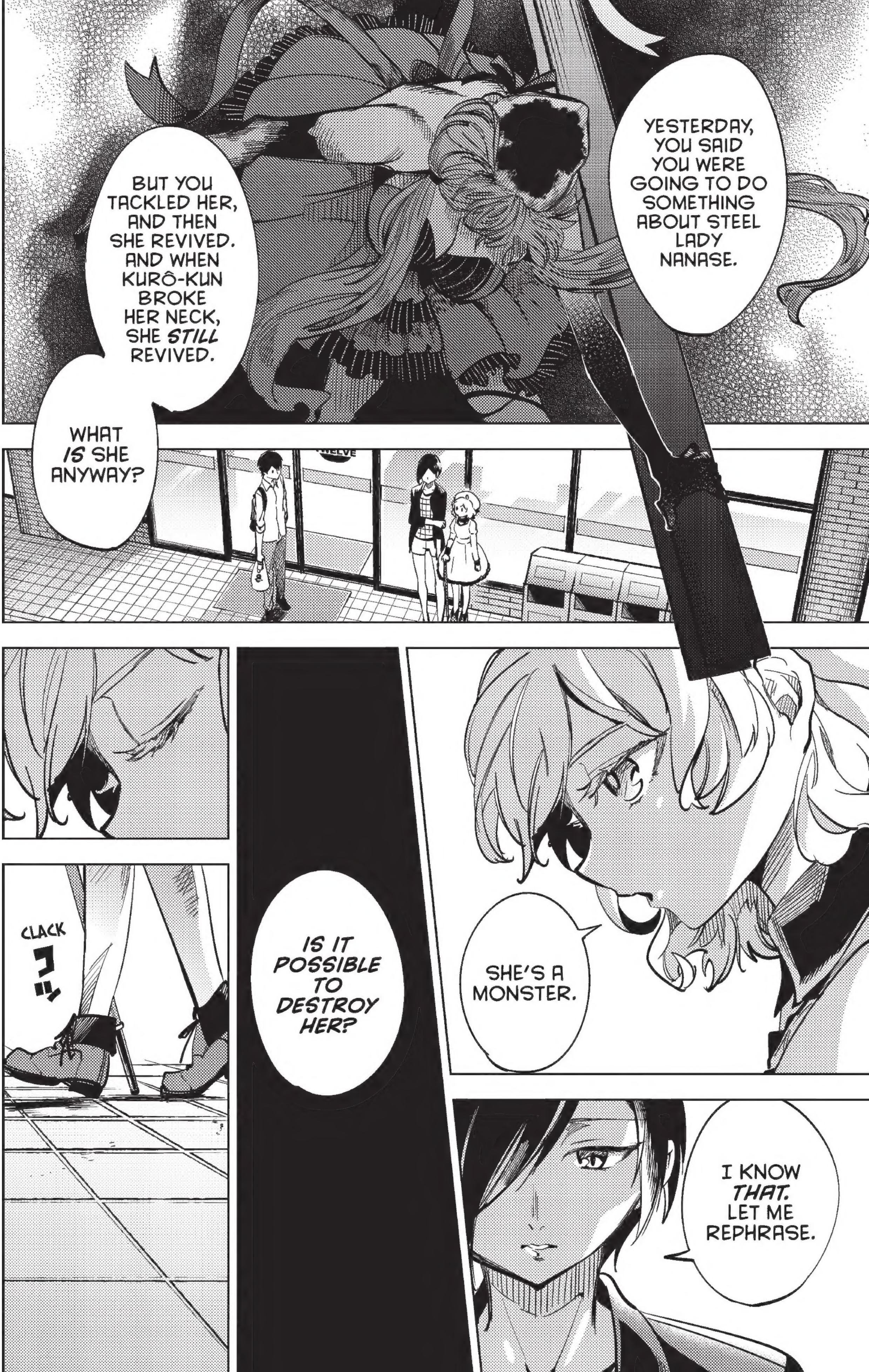
CHAPTER 5: "A MONSTER OF THE IMAGINATION" 3

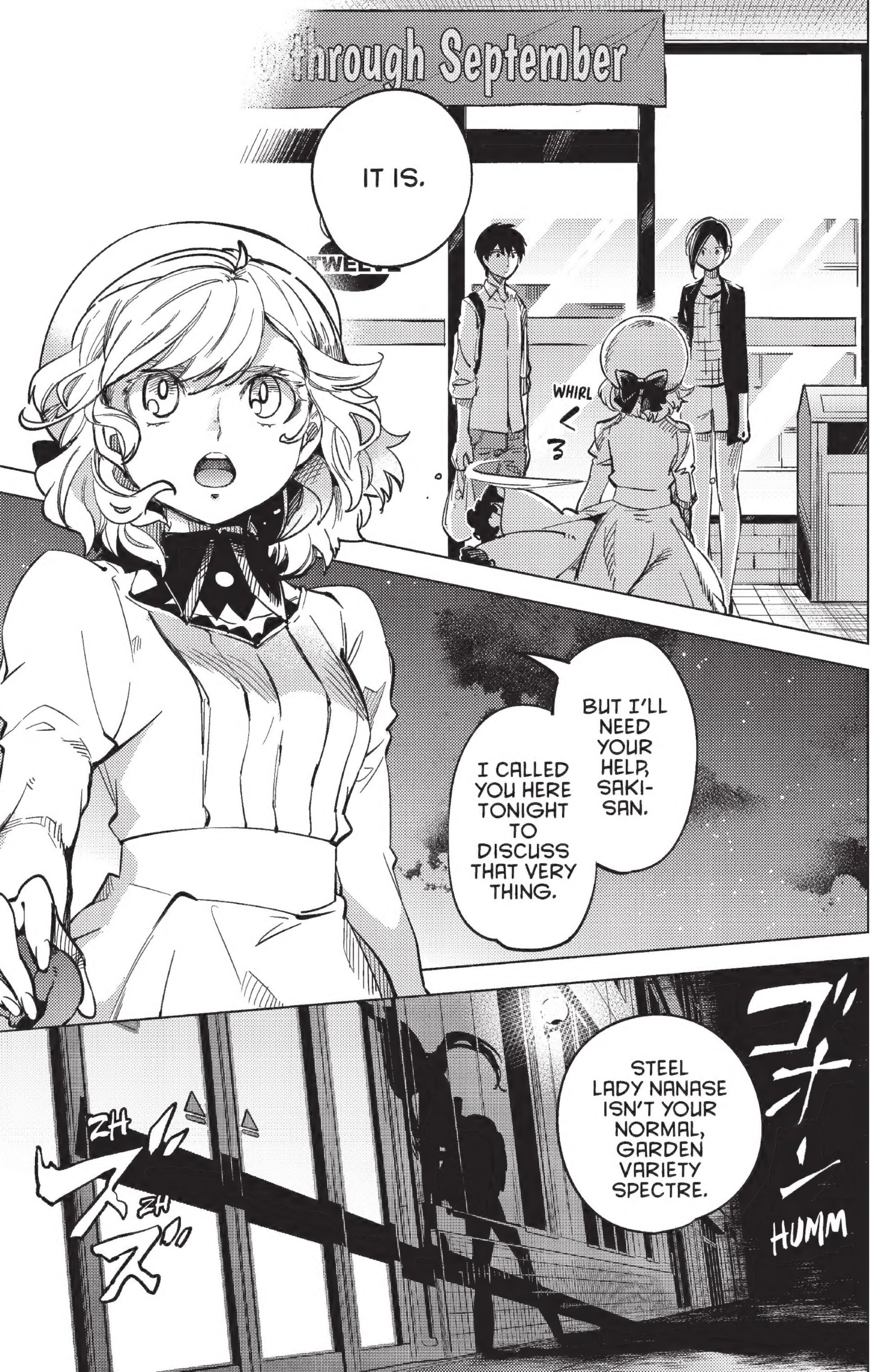
CHAPTER 6: "KARIN NANASE AND HATSUMI NANASE" 75

TRAVELING BONUS MANGA 173

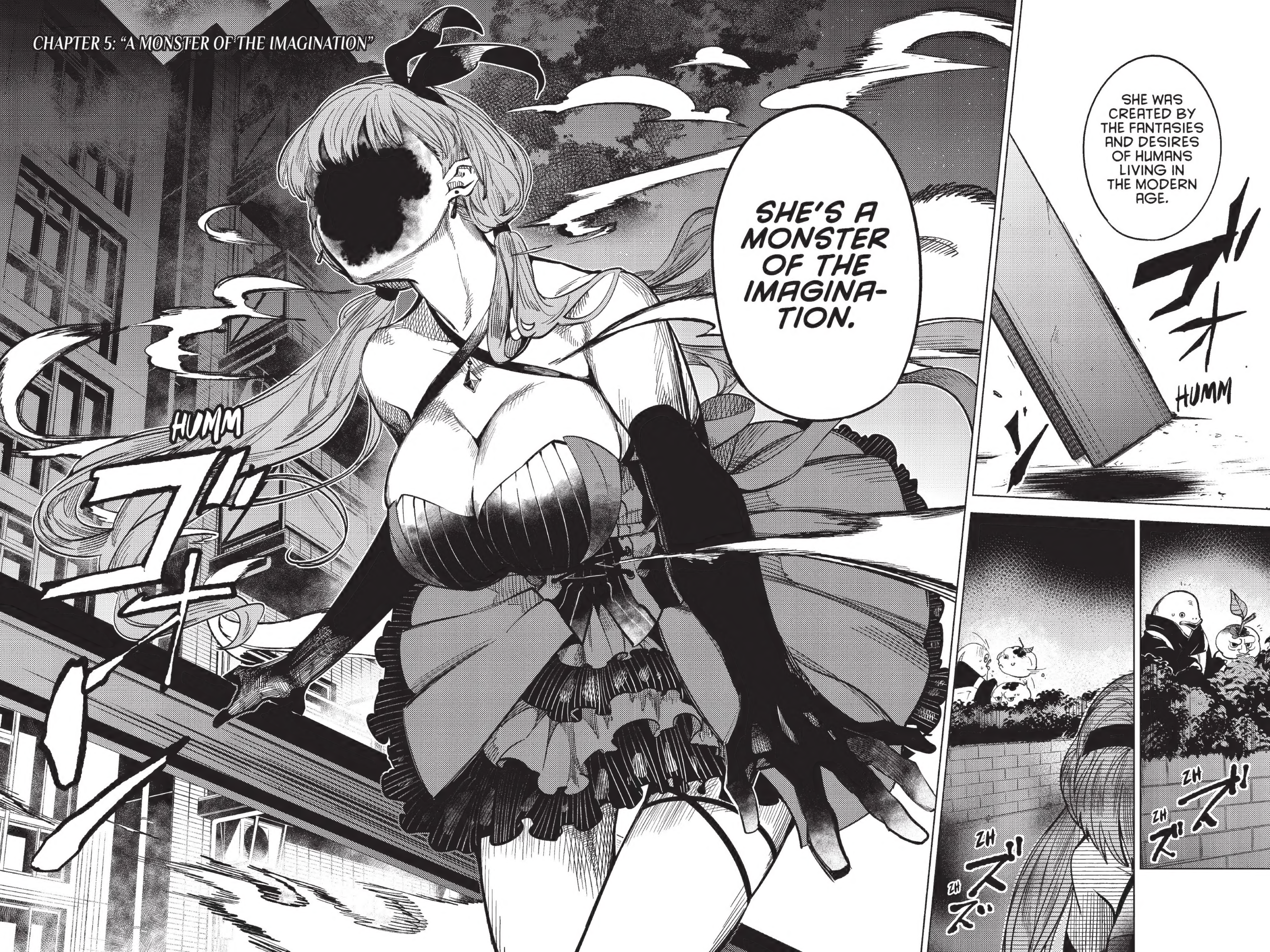


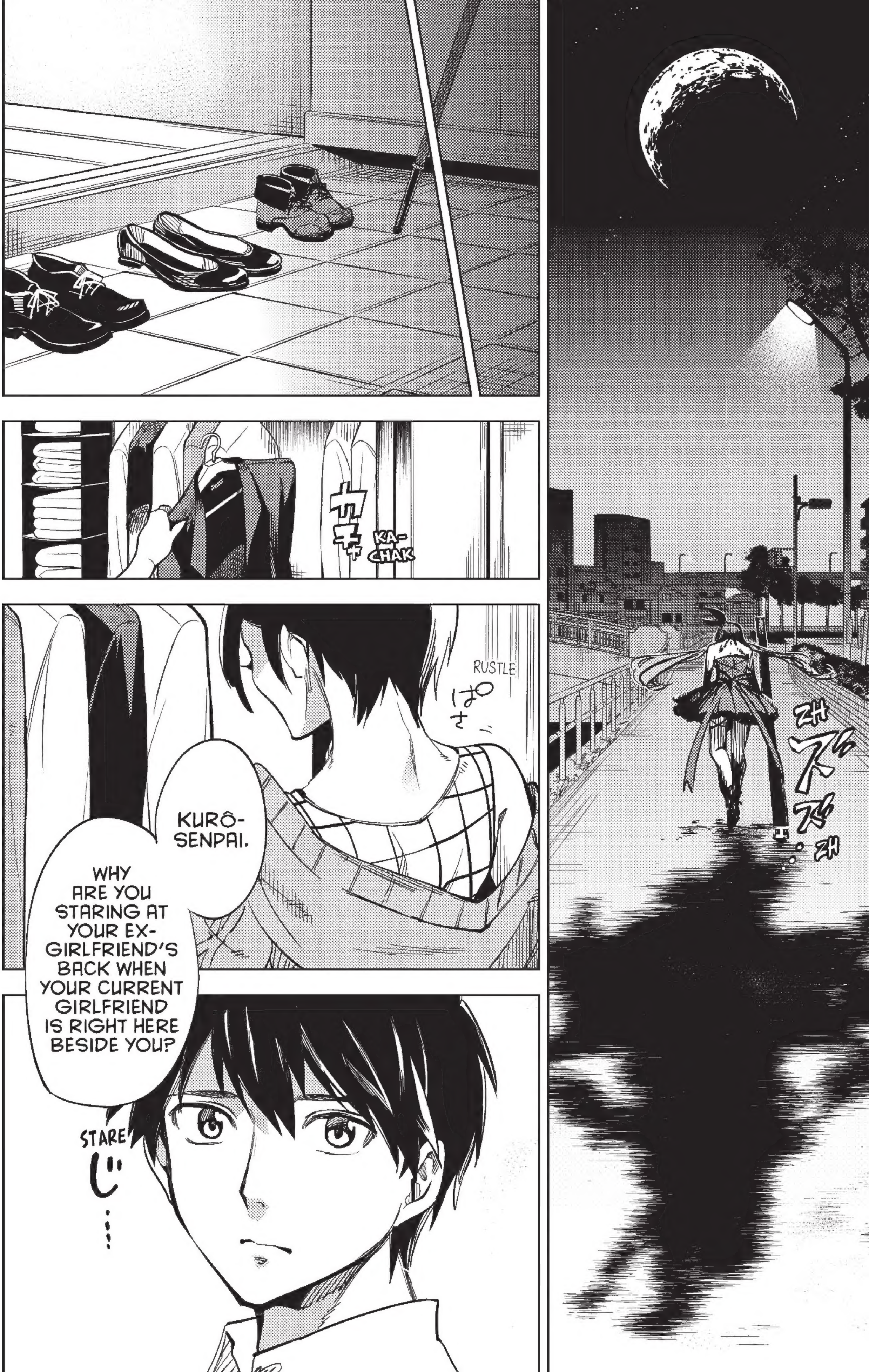

SIGH...
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?
...EXCUSE ME.
NUZZLE
もぞ
TWELVE
TWELVE
TWELVE
Oden ¥70 through Se
ber
YOU'RE STANDING AWFULLY CLOSE TO ME.
I DON'T SEE WHY THAT'S A PROBLEM.
たり
ぴっ
CLING
TWELVE
TWELVE
VRRR
ガー
...IWANAGA-SAN.

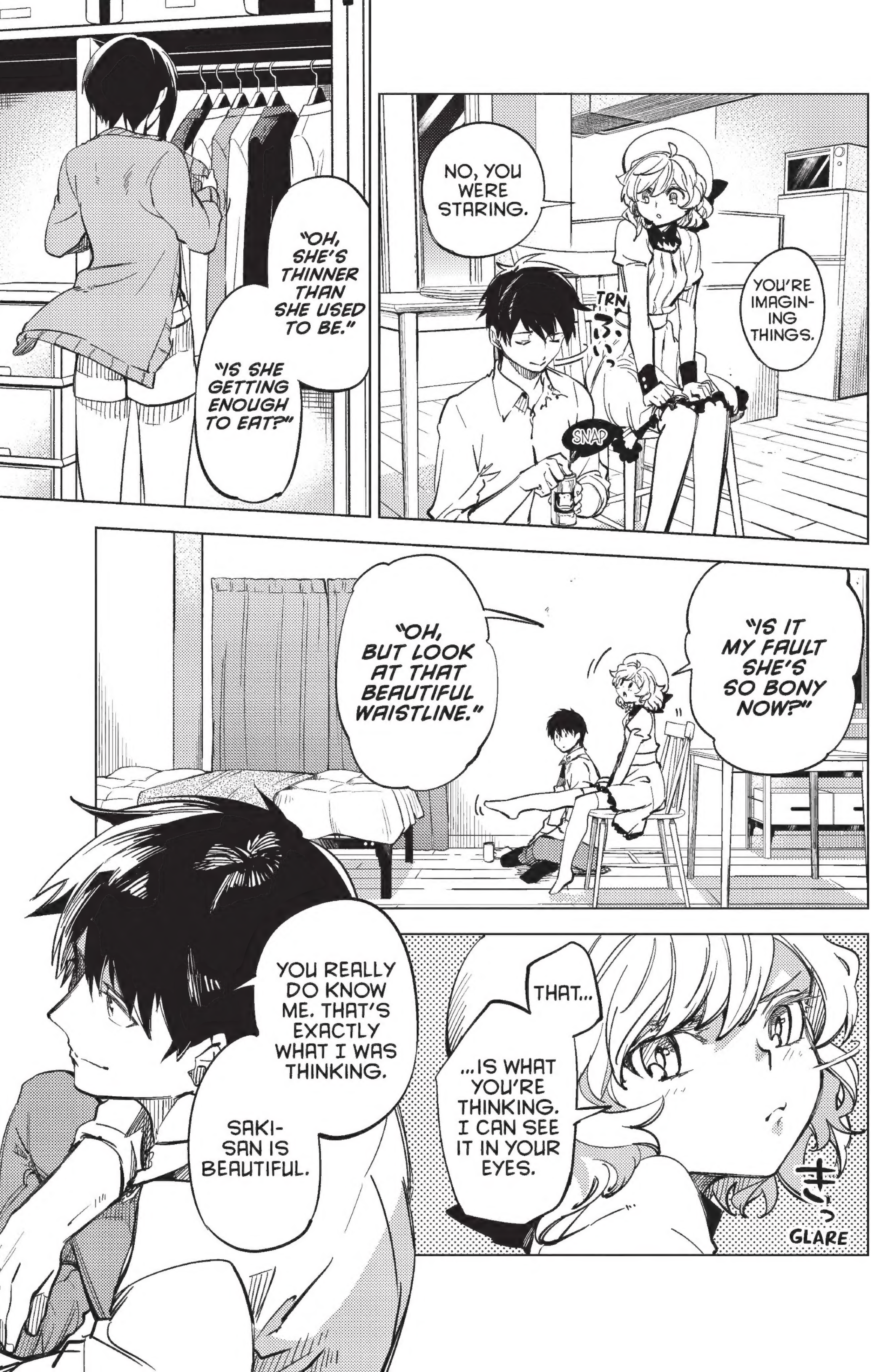

YESTERDAY, YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT STEEL LADY NANASE.
BUT YOU TACKLED HER, AND THEN SHE REVIVED. AND WHEN KURÔ-KUN BROKE HER NECK, SHE *STILL* REVIVED.
WHAT *IS* SHE ANYWAY?
SHE'S A MONSTER.
I KNOW *THAT.* LET ME REPHRASE.
IS IT POSSIBLE TO DESTROY HER?
CLACK
コッ

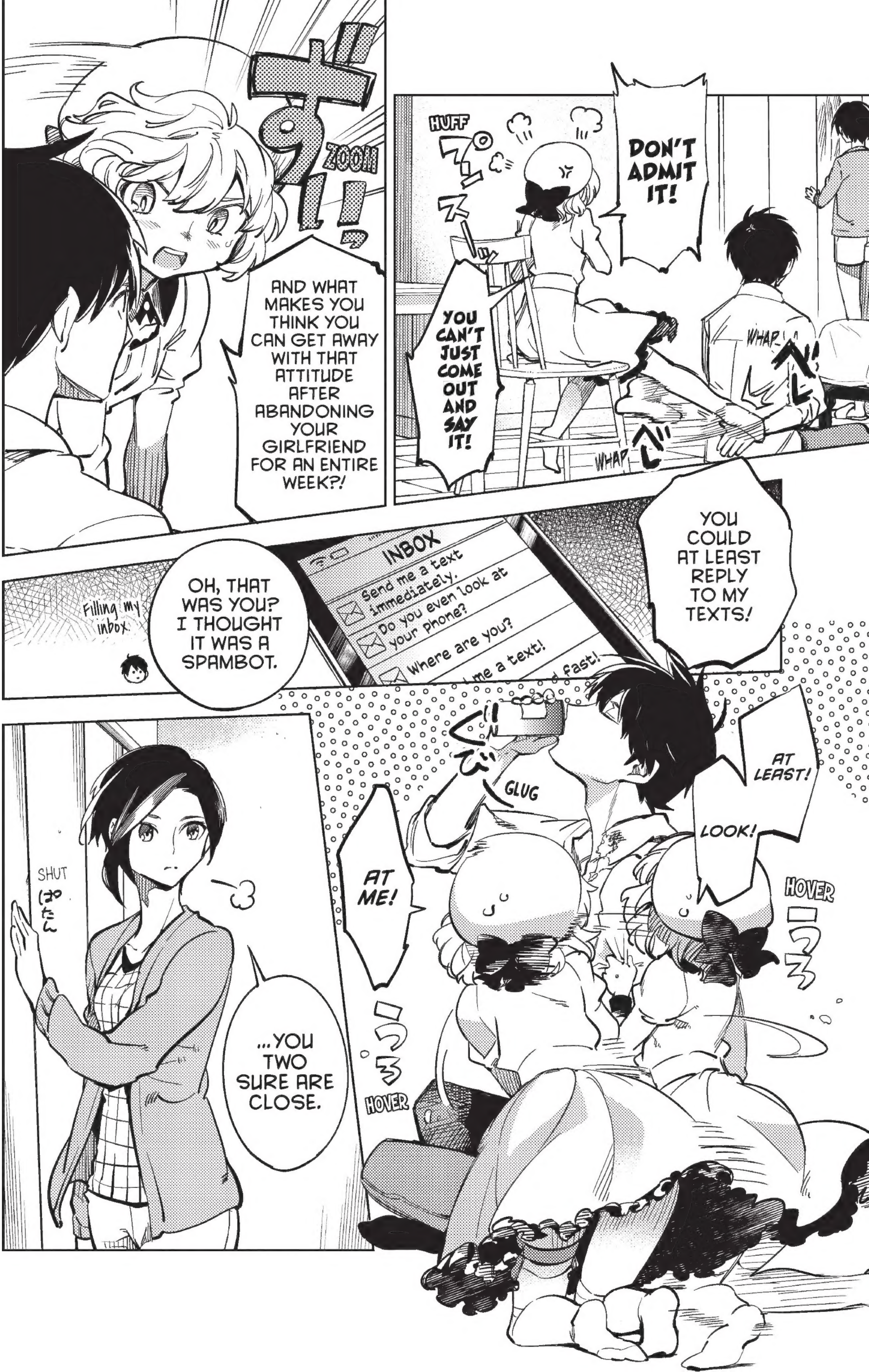

through September
IT IS.
TWELVE
WHIRL
くる
BUT I'LL NEED YOUR HELP, SAKI-SAN.
I CALLED YOU HERE TONIGHT TO DISCUSS THAT VERY THING.
ゴオン
HUMM
STEEL LADY NANASE ISN'T YOUR NORMAL, GARDEN VARIETY SPECTRE.
ズ
ZH
ズ
ZH

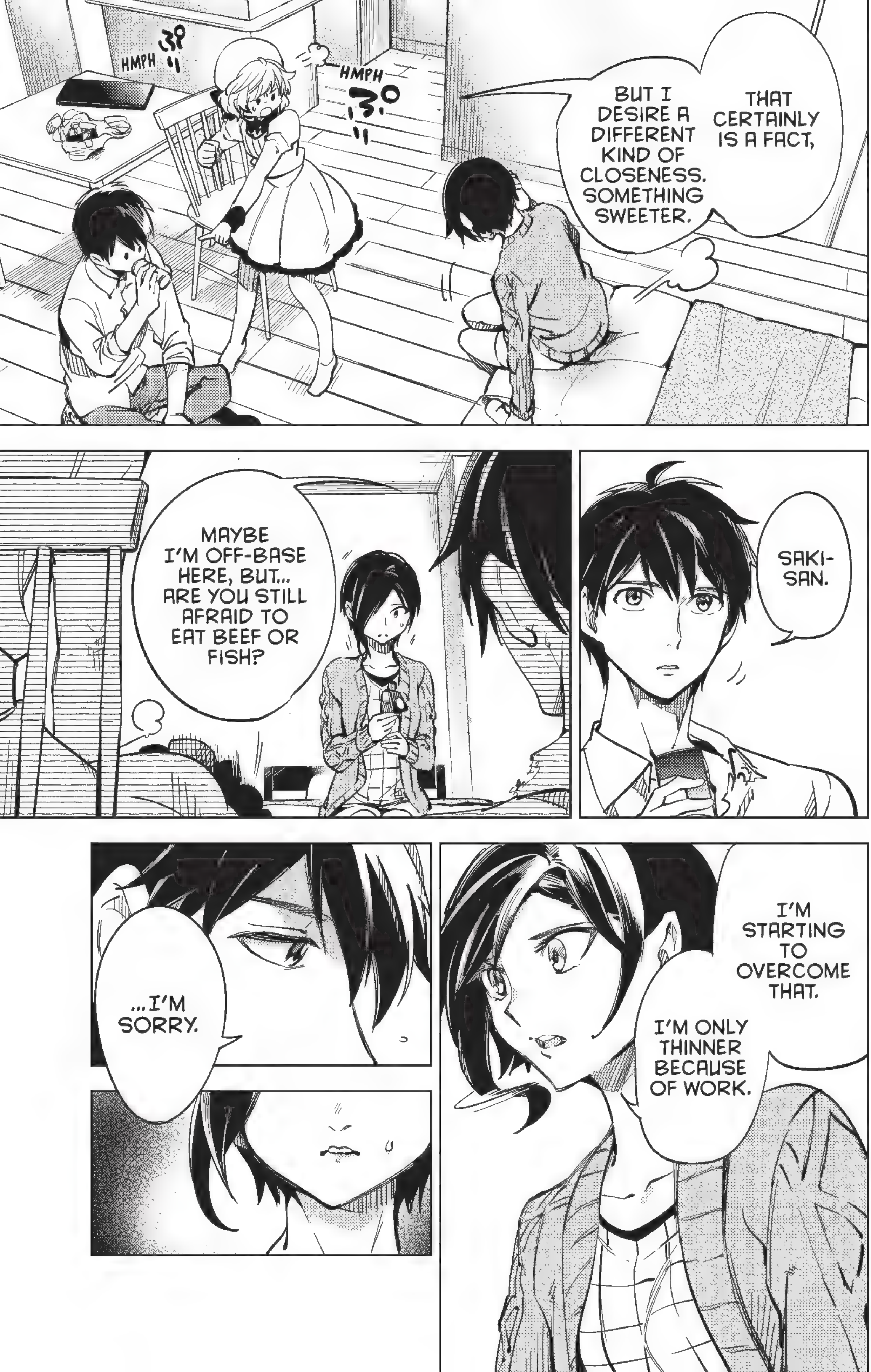
CHAPTER 5: “A MONSTER OF THE IMAGINATION”

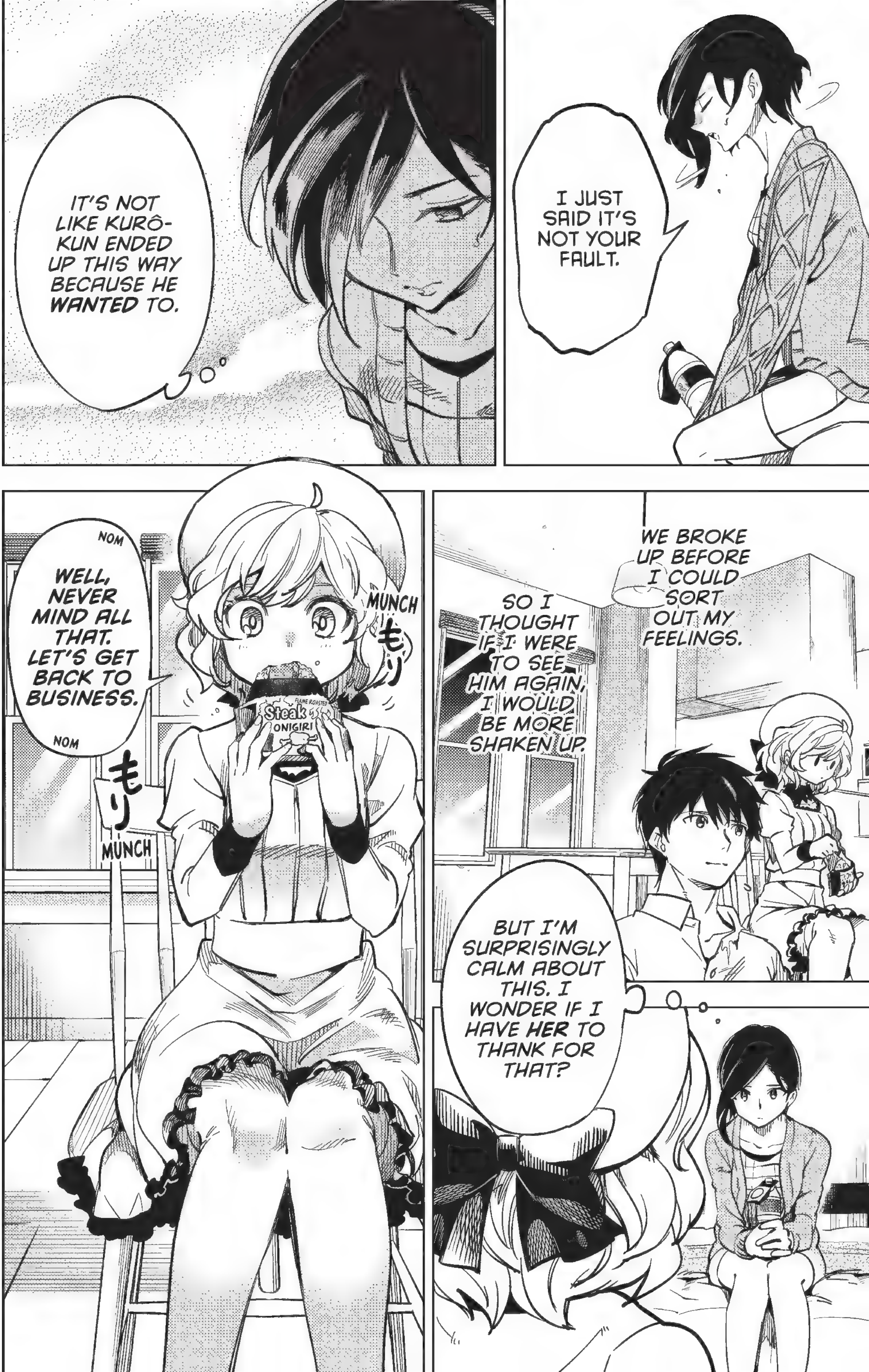

SHE WAS CREATED BY THE FANTASIES AND DESIRES OF HUMANS LIVING IN THE MODERN AGE.
HUMM
ZH
ZH
ZH
ZH
SHE'S A MONSTER OF THE IMAGINATION.
HUMM

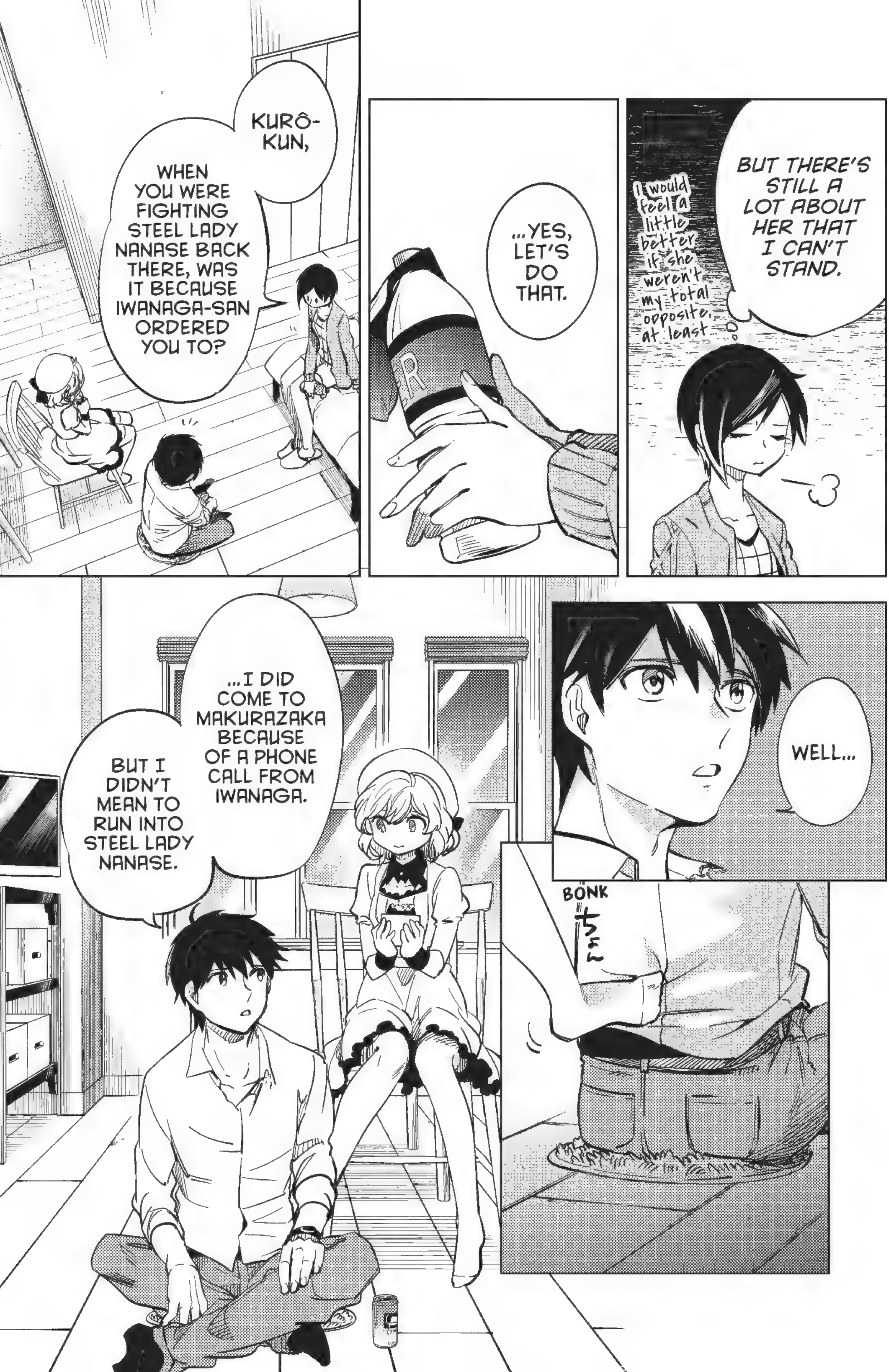

ZH ズズ ZH
カチャ KA-CHAK
RUSTLE ぱさ
KURÔ-SENPAI.
WHY ARE YOU STARING AT YOUR EX-GIRLFRIEND'S BACK WHEN YOUR CURRENT GIRLFRIEND IS RIGHT HERE BESIDE YOU?
STARE じ…

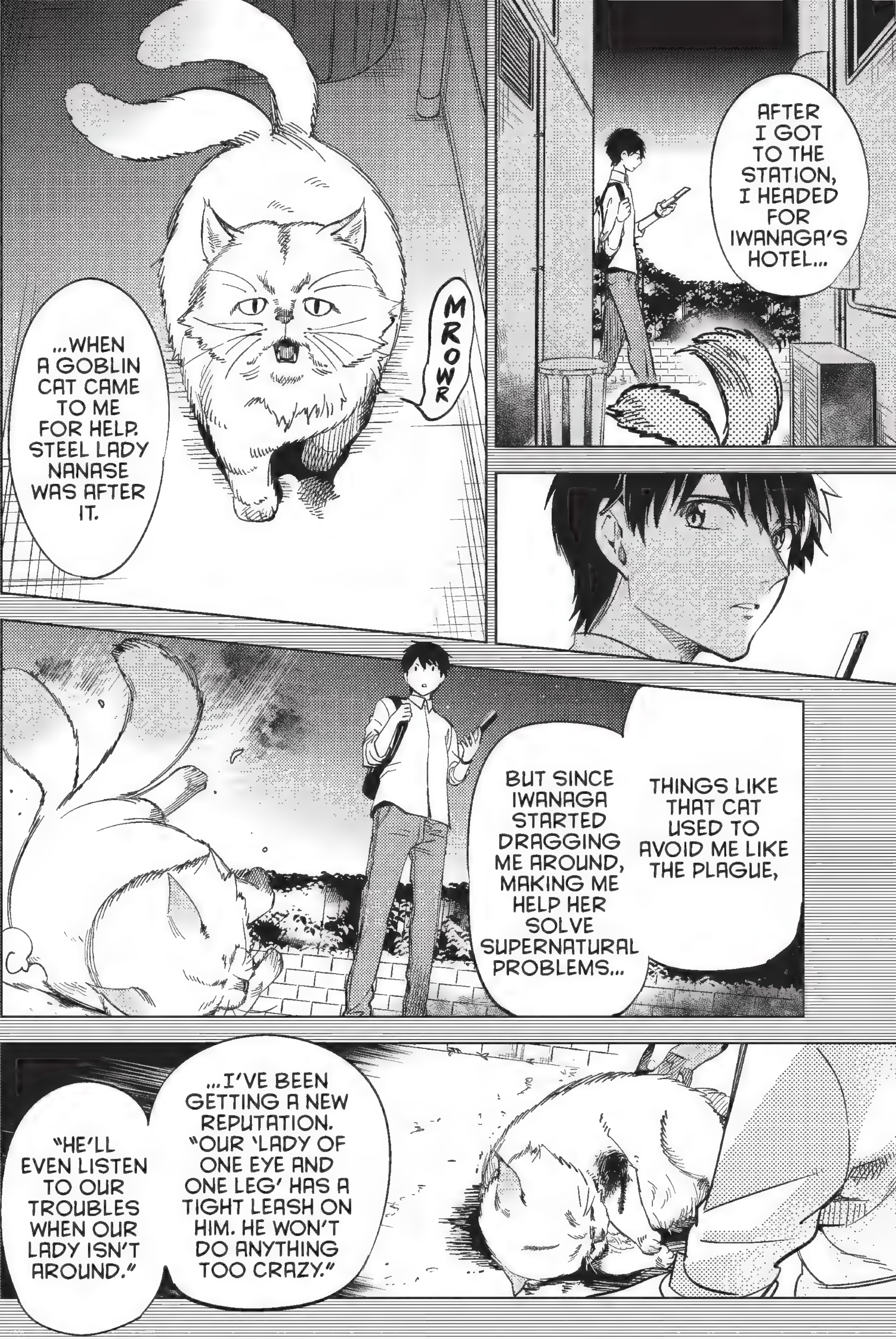

NO, YOU WERE STARING.
YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS.
TRN ふぃっ
SNAP
"OH, SHE'S THINNER THAN SHE USED TO BE."
"IS SHE GETTING ENOUGH TO EAT?"
"IS IT MY FAULT SHE'S SO BONY NOW?"
"OH, BUT LOOK AT THAT BEAUTIFUL WAISTLINE."
THAT...
...IS WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES.
きっ GLARE
YOU REALLY DO KNOW ME. THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS THINKING.
SAKI-SAN IS BEAUTIFUL.

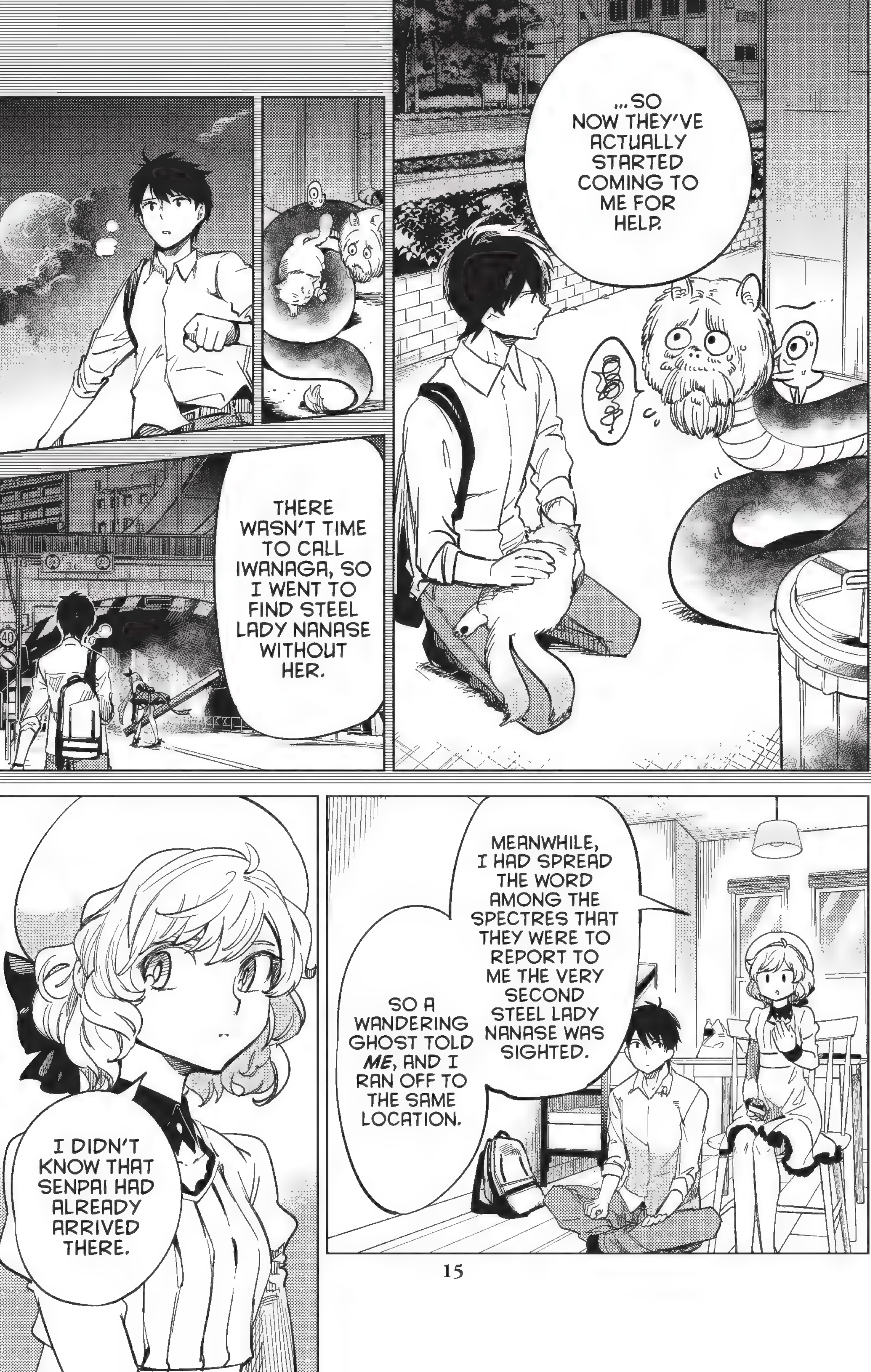

HUFF
DON'T ADMIT IT!
YOU CAN'T JUST COME OUT AND SAY IT!
WHAP
WHAP
ZOOM
AND WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THAT ATTITUDE AFTER ABANDONING YOUR GIRLFRIEND FOR AN ENTIRE WEEK?!
YOU COULD AT LEAST REPLY TO MY TEXTS!
INBOX
Send me a text immediately.
Do you even look at your phone?
Where are you?
me a text!
fast!
OH, THAT WAS YOU? I THOUGHT IT WAS A SPAMBOT.
Filling my inbox.
AT LEAST!
LOOK!
AT ME!
GLUG
HOVER
HOVER
SHUT
ぱたん
...YOU TWO SURE ARE CLOSE.

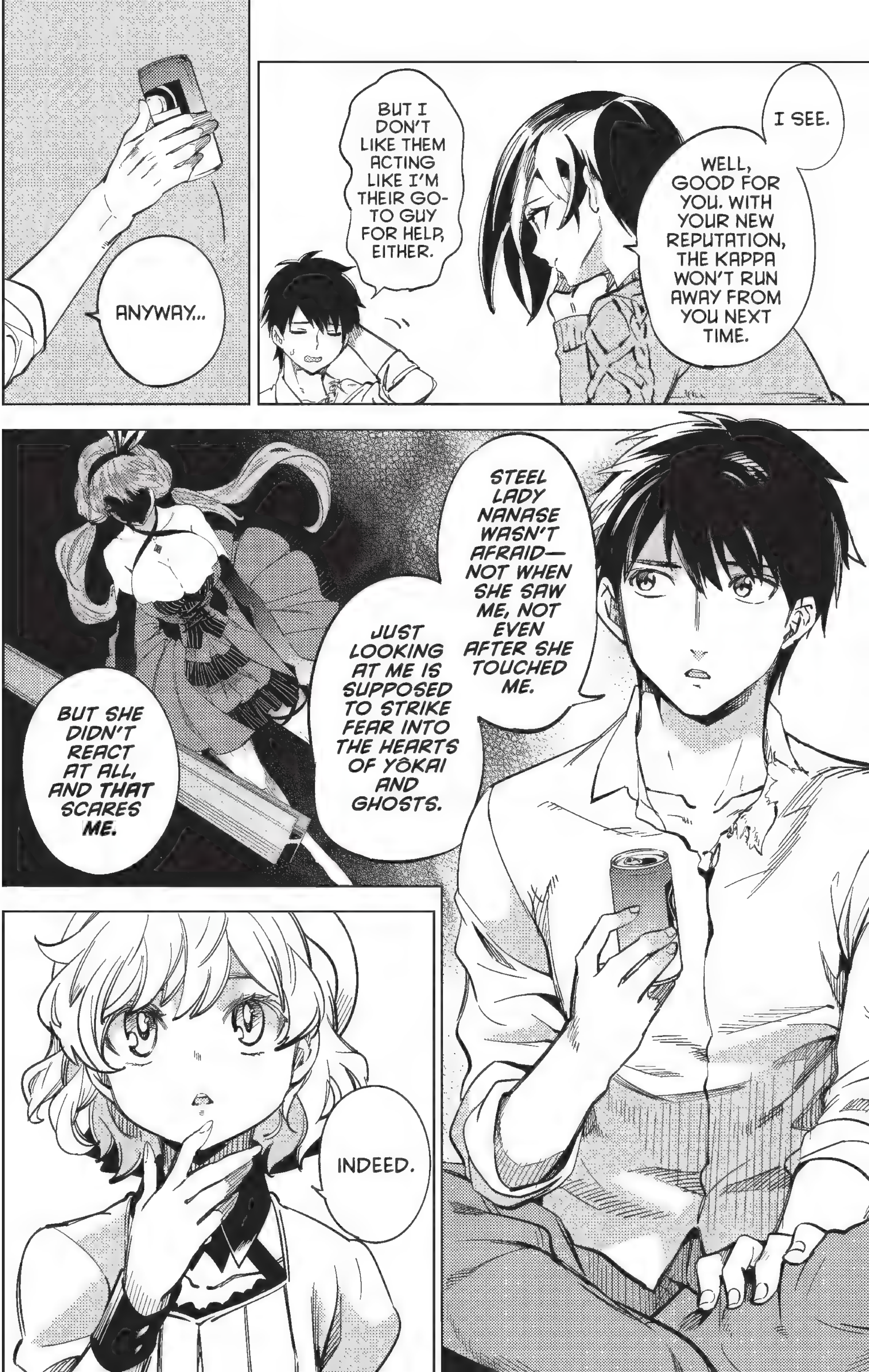

HMPH
HMPH
THAT CERTAINLY IS A FACT,
BUT I DESIRE A DIFFERENT KIND OF CLOSENESS. SOMETHING SWEETER.
SAKI-SAN.
MAYBE I'M OFF-BASE HERE, BUT... ARE YOU STILL AFRAID TO EAT BEEF OR FISH?
I'M STARTING TO OVERCOME THAT.
I'M ONLY THINNER BECAUSE OF WORK.
...I'M SORRY.

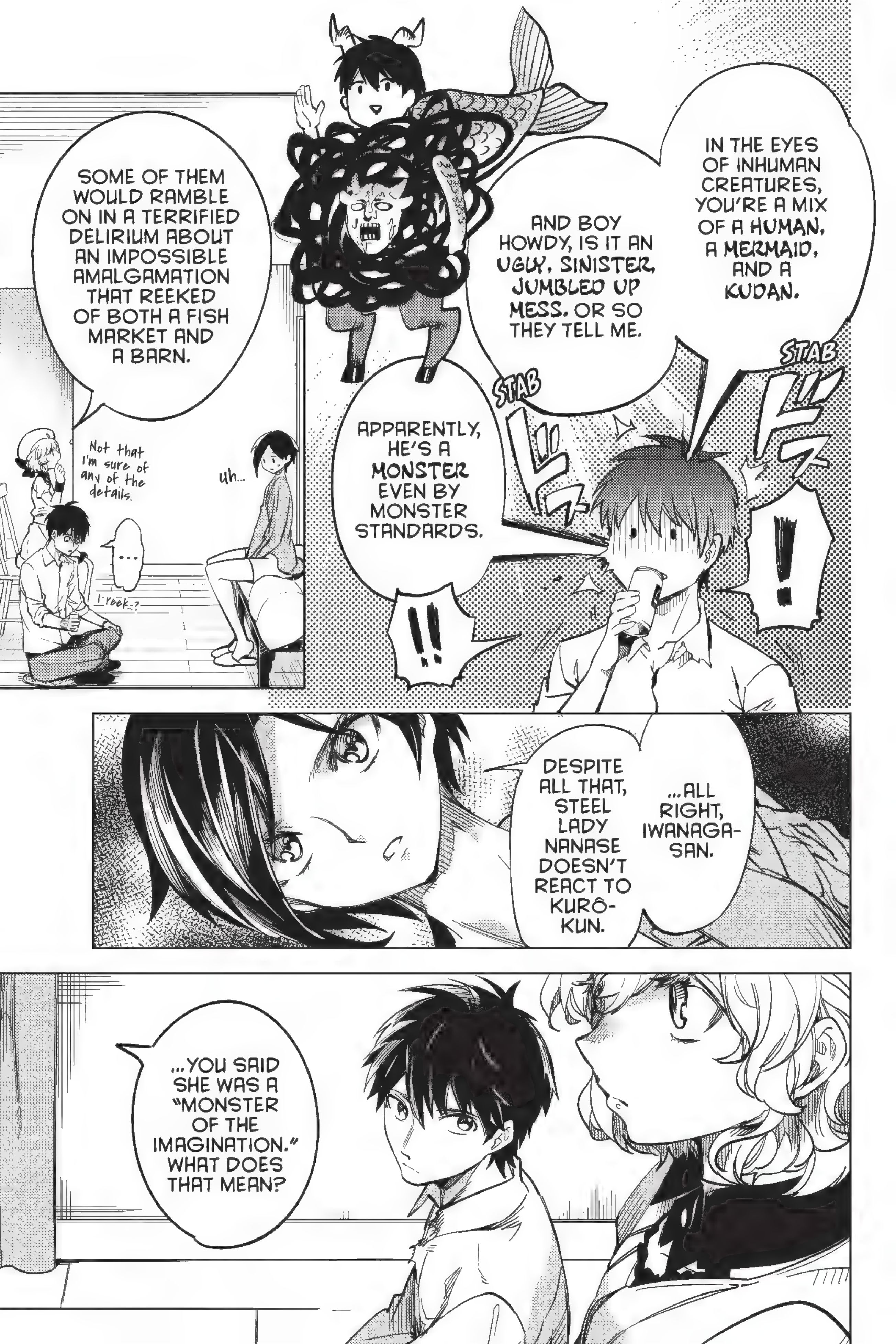

I JUST SAID IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
IT'S NOT LIKE KURÔ-KUN ENDED UP THIS WAY BECAUSE HE *WANTED* TO.
WE BROKE UP BEFORE I COULD SORT OUT MY FEELINGS.
SO I THOUGHT IF I WERE TO SEE HIM AGAIN, I WOULD BE MORE SHAKEN UP.
BUT I'M SURPRISINGLY CALM ABOUT THIS. I WONDER IF I HAVE *HER* TO THANK FOR THAT?
MUNCH もり
FLAME ROASTED Steak ONIGIRI
NOM
WELL, NEVER MIND ALL THAT. LET'S GET BACK TO BUSINESS.
NOM
もり MUNCH

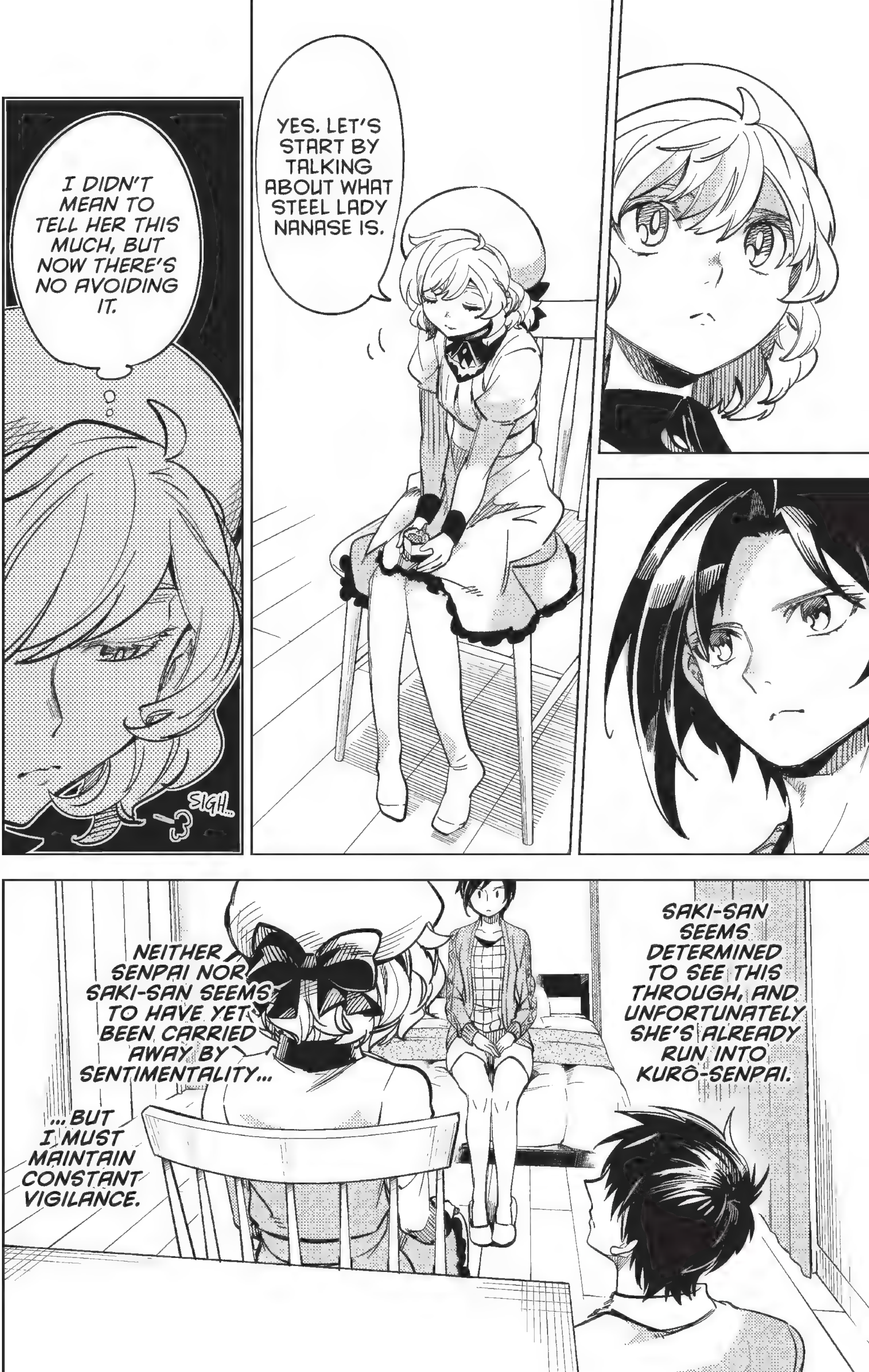

BUT THERE'S STILL A LOT ABOUT HER THAT I CAN'T STAND.
I would feel a little better if she weren't my total opposite, at least...
...YES, LET'S DO THAT.
KURÔ-KUN,
WHEN YOU WERE FIGHTING STEEL LADY NANASE BACK THERE, WAS IT BECAUSE IWANAGA-SAN ORDERED YOU TO?
WELL...
BONK
ちょん
...I DID COME TO MAKURAZAKA BECAUSE OF A PHONE CALL FROM IWANAGA.
BUT I DIDN'T MEAN TO RUN INTO STEEL LADY NANASE.

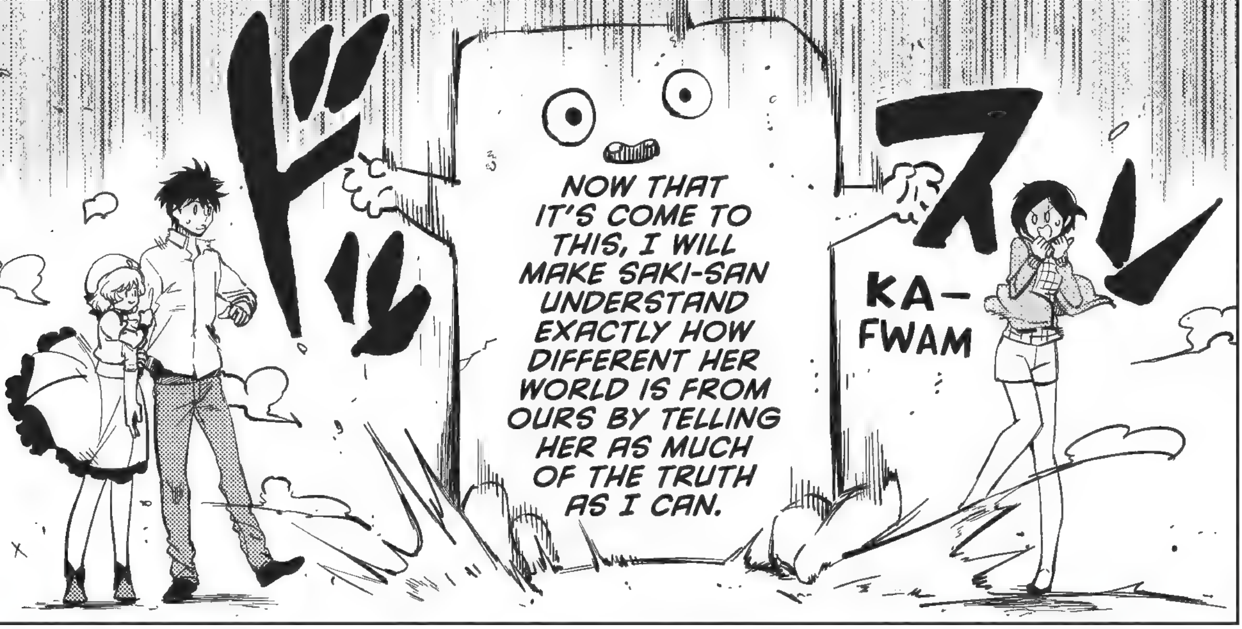

AFTER I GOT TO THE STATION, I HEADED FOR IWANAGA'S HOTEL...
MROWR
...WHEN A GOBLIN CAT CAME TO ME FOR HELP. STEEL LADY NANASE WAS AFTER IT.
THINGS LIKE THAT CAT USED TO AVOID ME LIKE THE PLAGUE,
BUT SINCE IWANAGA STARTED DRAGGING ME AROUND, MAKING ME HELP HER SOLVE SUPERNATURAL PROBLEMS...
...I'VE BEEN GETTING A NEW REPUTATION. "OUR 'LADY OF ONE EYE AND ONE LEG' HAS A TIGHT LEASH ON HIM. HE WON'T DO ANYTHING TOO CRAZY."
"HE'LL EVEN LISTEN TO OUR TROUBLES WHEN OUR LADY ISN'T AROUND."

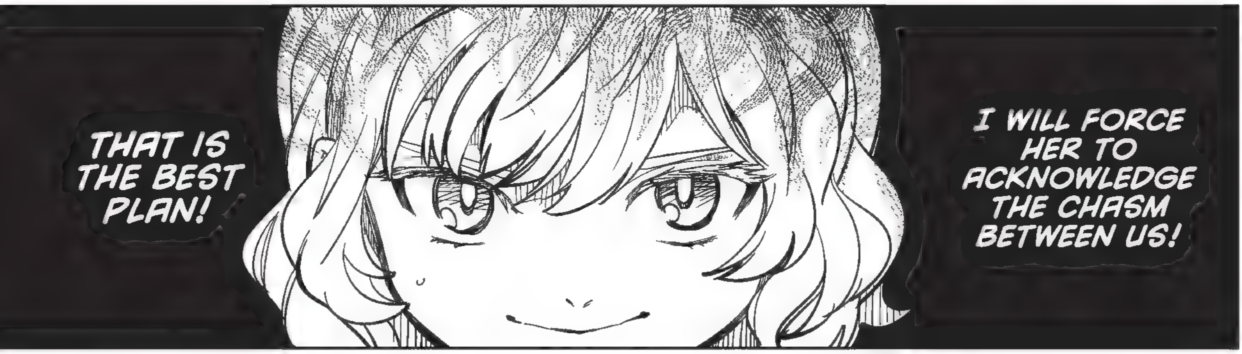

...SO NOW THEY'VE ACTUALLY STARTED COMING TO ME FOR HELP.
THERE WASN'T TIME TO CALL IWANAGA, SO I WENT TO FIND STEEL LADY NANASE WITHOUT HER.
MEANWHILE, I HAD SPREAD THE WORD AMONG THE SPECTRES THAT THEY WERE TO REPORT TO ME THE VERY SECOND STEEL LADY NANASE WAS SIGHTED.
SO A WANDERING GHOST TOLD *ME*, AND I RAN OFF TO THE SAME LOCATION.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT SENPAI HAD ALREADY ARRIVED THERE.

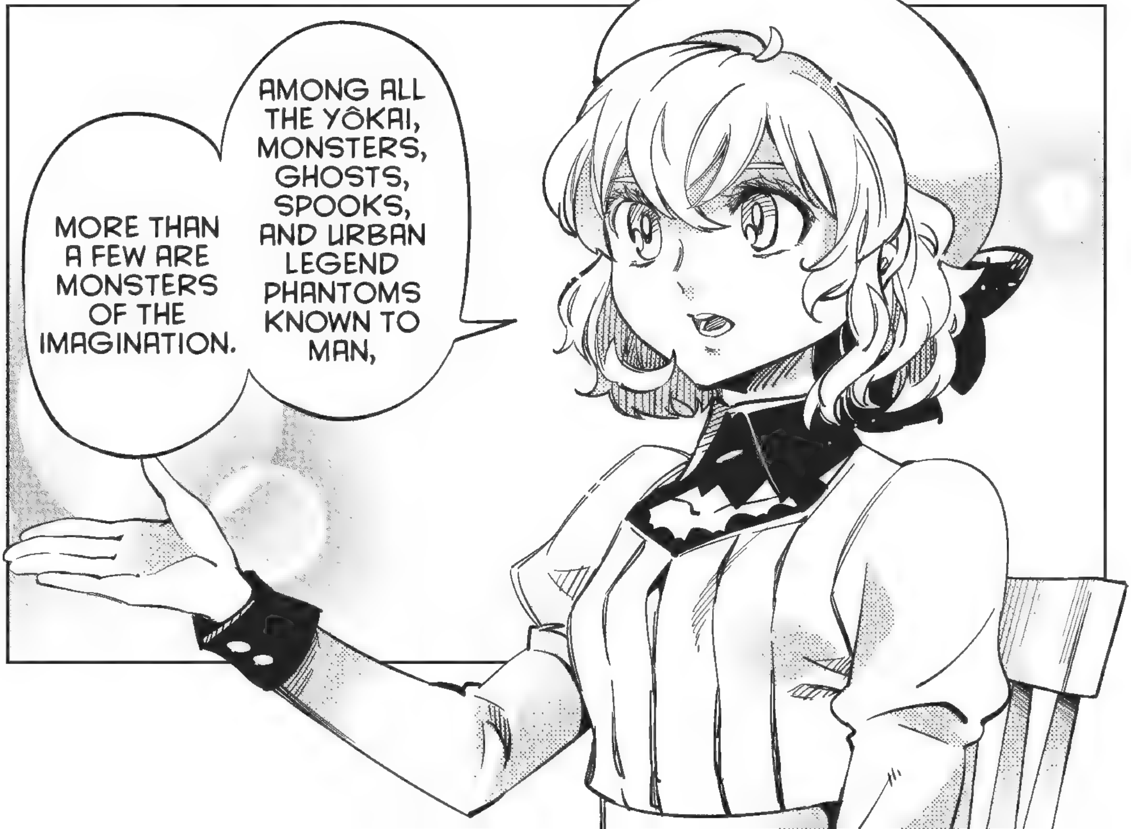

I SEE.
WELL, GOOD FOR YOU. WITH YOUR NEW REPUTATION, THE KAPPA WON'T RUN AWAY FROM YOU NEXT TIME.
BUT I DON'T LIKE THEM ACTING LIKE I'M THEIR GO-TO GUY FOR HELP, EITHER.
ANYWAY...
STEEL LADY NANASE WASN'T AFRAID—NOT WHEN SHE SAW ME, NOT EVEN AFTER SHE TOUCHED ME.
JUST LOOKING AT ME IS SUPPOSED TO STRIKE FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF YÔKAI AND GHOSTS.
BUT SHE DIDN'T REACT AT ALL, AND THAT SCARES ME.
INDEED.

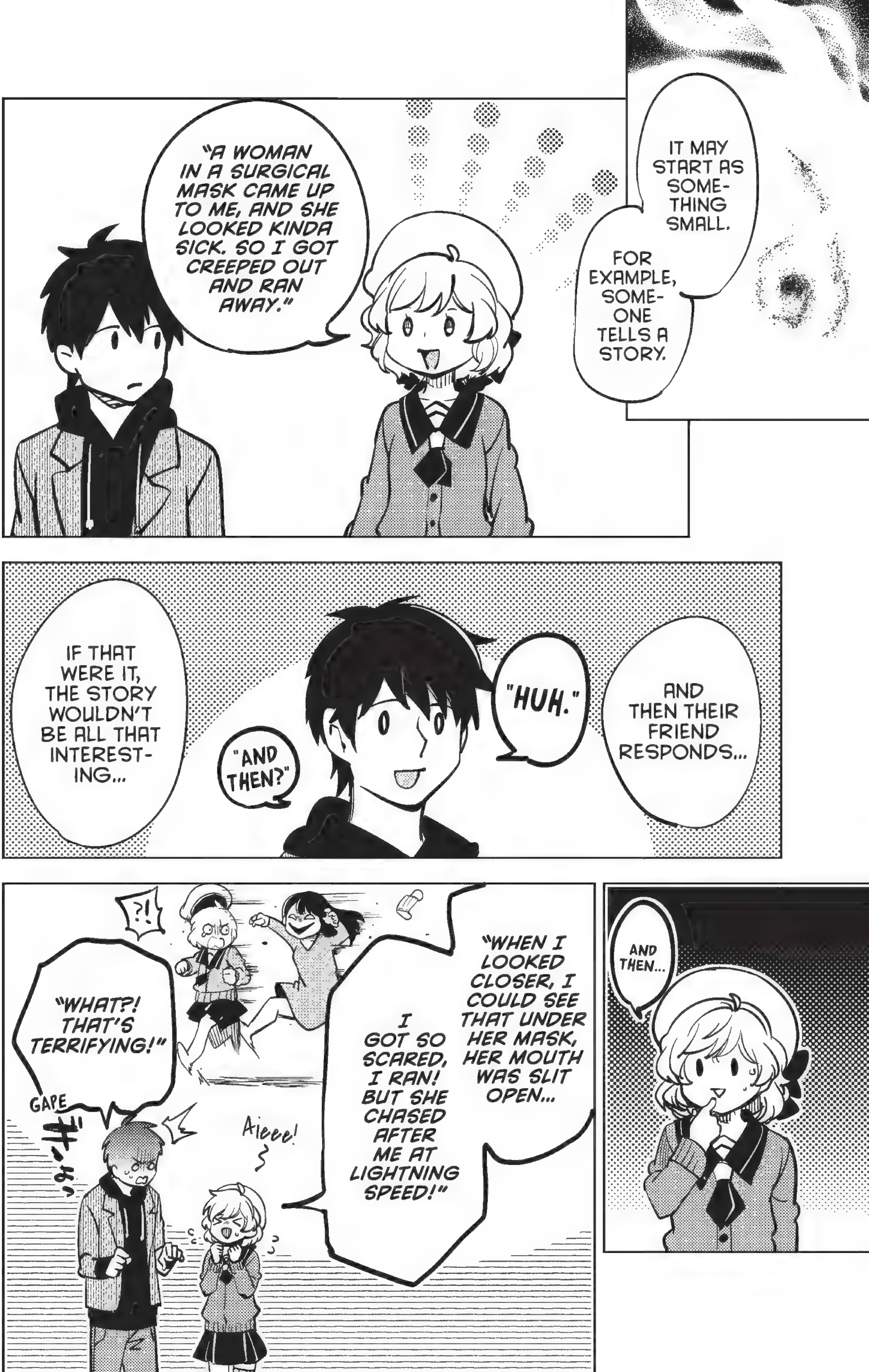

IN THE EYES OF INHUMAN CREATURES, YOU'RE A MIX OF A HUMAN, A MERMAID, AND A KUDAN.
AND BOY HOWDY, IS IT AN UGLY, SINISTER, JUMBLED UP MESS. OR SO THEY TELL ME.
SOME OF THEM WOULD RAMBLE ON IN A TERRIFIED DELIRIUM ABOUT AN IMPOSSIBLE AMALGAMATION THAT REEKED OF BOTH A FISH MARKET AND A BARN.
Not that I'm sure of any of the details.
uh...
...
I-reek...?
STAB
ドス
STAB
ドス
!!
APPARENTLY, HE'S A MONSTER EVEN BY MONSTER STANDARDS.
!!
...ALL RIGHT, IWANAGA-SAN.
DESPITE ALL THAT, STEEL LADY NANASE DOESN'T REACT TO KURÔ-KUN.
...YOU SAID SHE WAS A "MONSTER OF THE IMAGINATION." WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

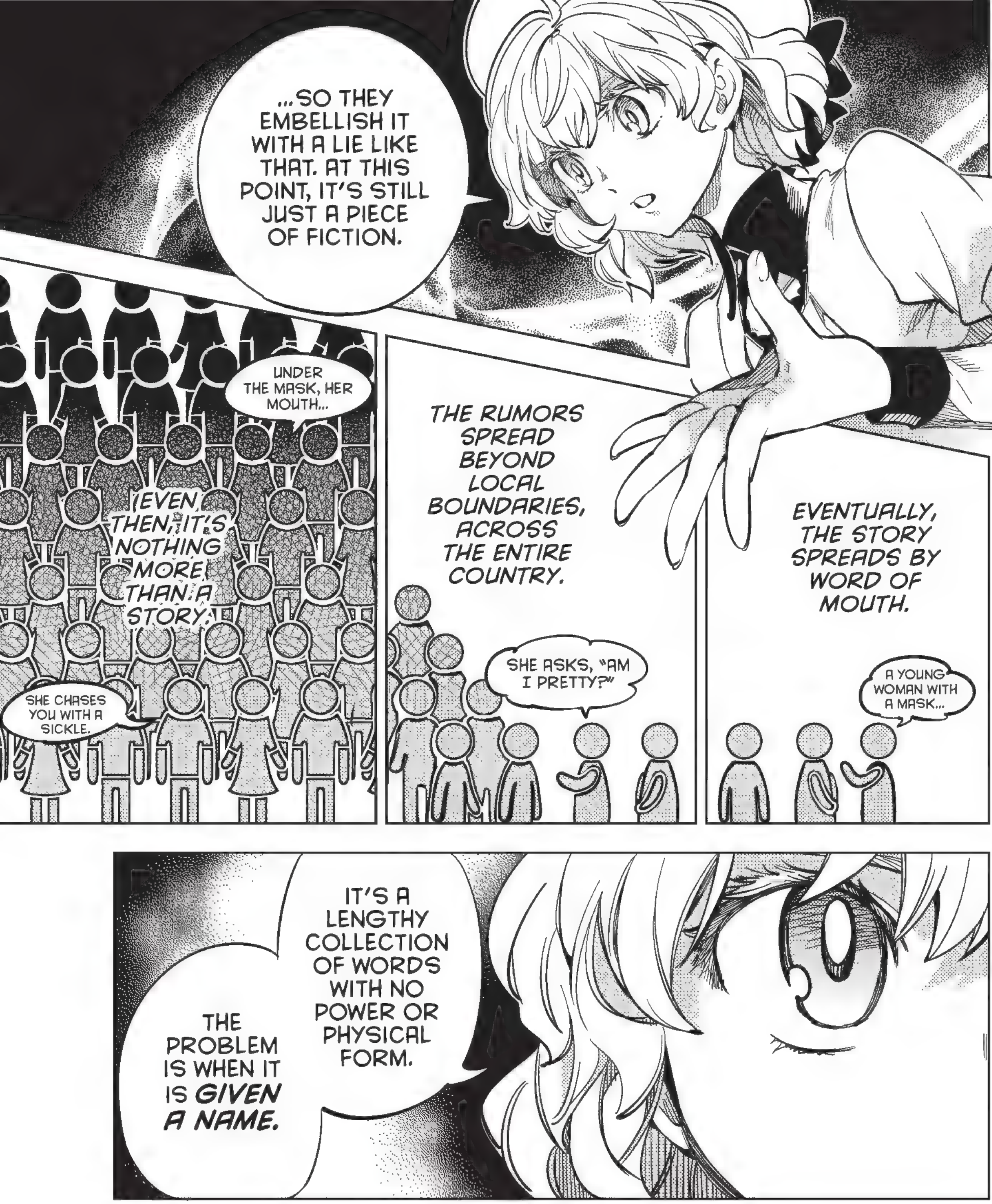

YES. LET'S START BY TALKING ABOUT WHAT STEEL LADY NANASE IS.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO TELL HER THIS MUCH, BUT NOW THERE'S NO AVOIDING IT.
SIGH...
SAKI-SAN SEEMS DETERMINED TO SEE THIS THROUGH, AND UNFORTUNATELY SHE'S ALREADY RUN INTO KURÔ-SENPAI.
NEITHER SENPAI NOR SAKI-SAN SEEMS TO HAVE YET BEEN CARRIED AWAY BY SENTIMENTALITY...
...BUT I MUST MAINTAIN CONSTANT VIGILANCE.


ドッスン
KA-FWAM
NOW THAT IT'S COME TO THIS, I WILL MAKE SAKI-SAN UNDERSTAND EXACTLY HOW DIFFERENT HER WORLD IS FROM OURS BY TELLING HER AS MUCH OF THE TRUTH AS I CAN.

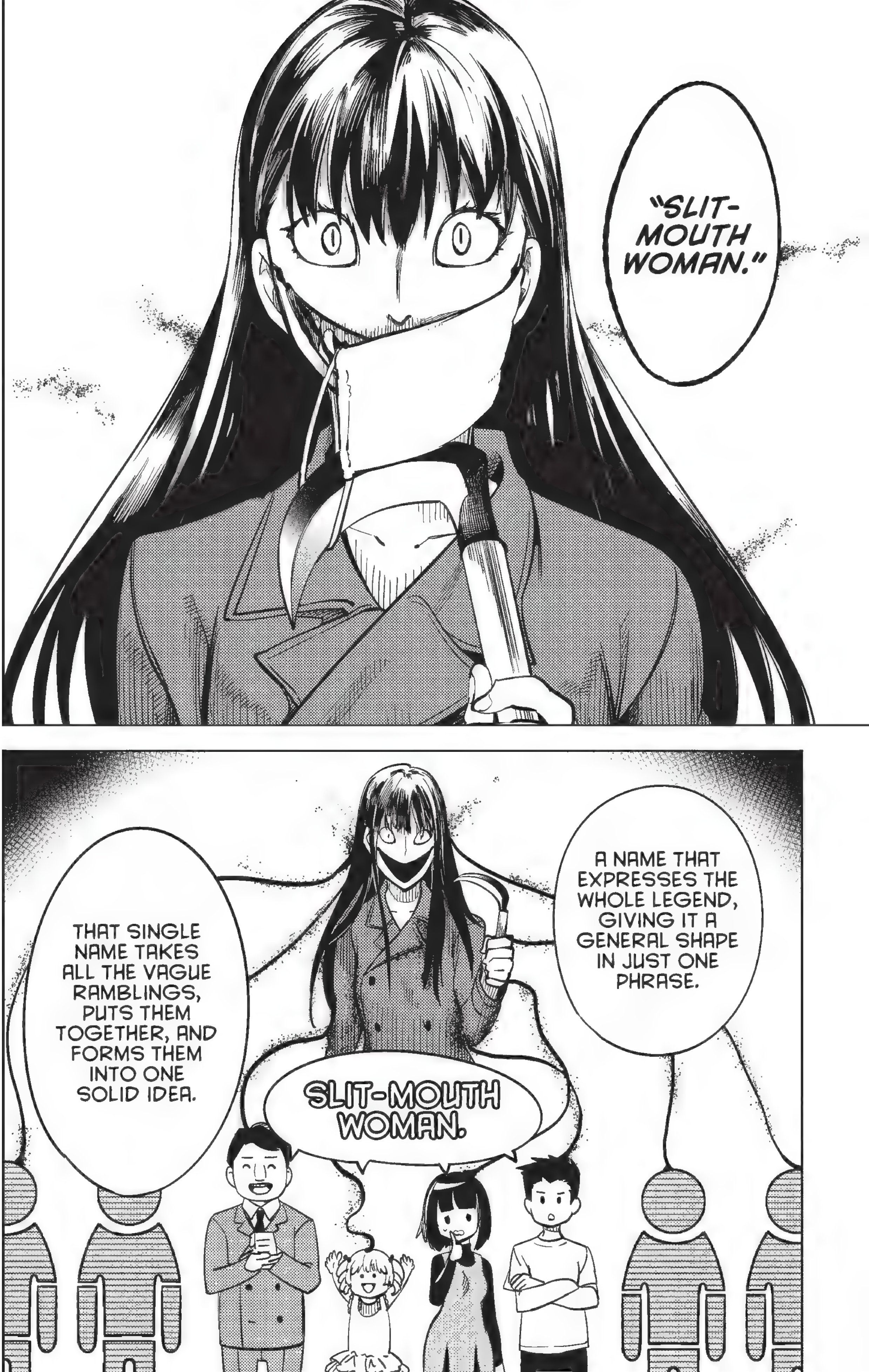

I WILL FORCE HER TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHASM BETWEEN US!
THAT IS THE BEST PLAN!

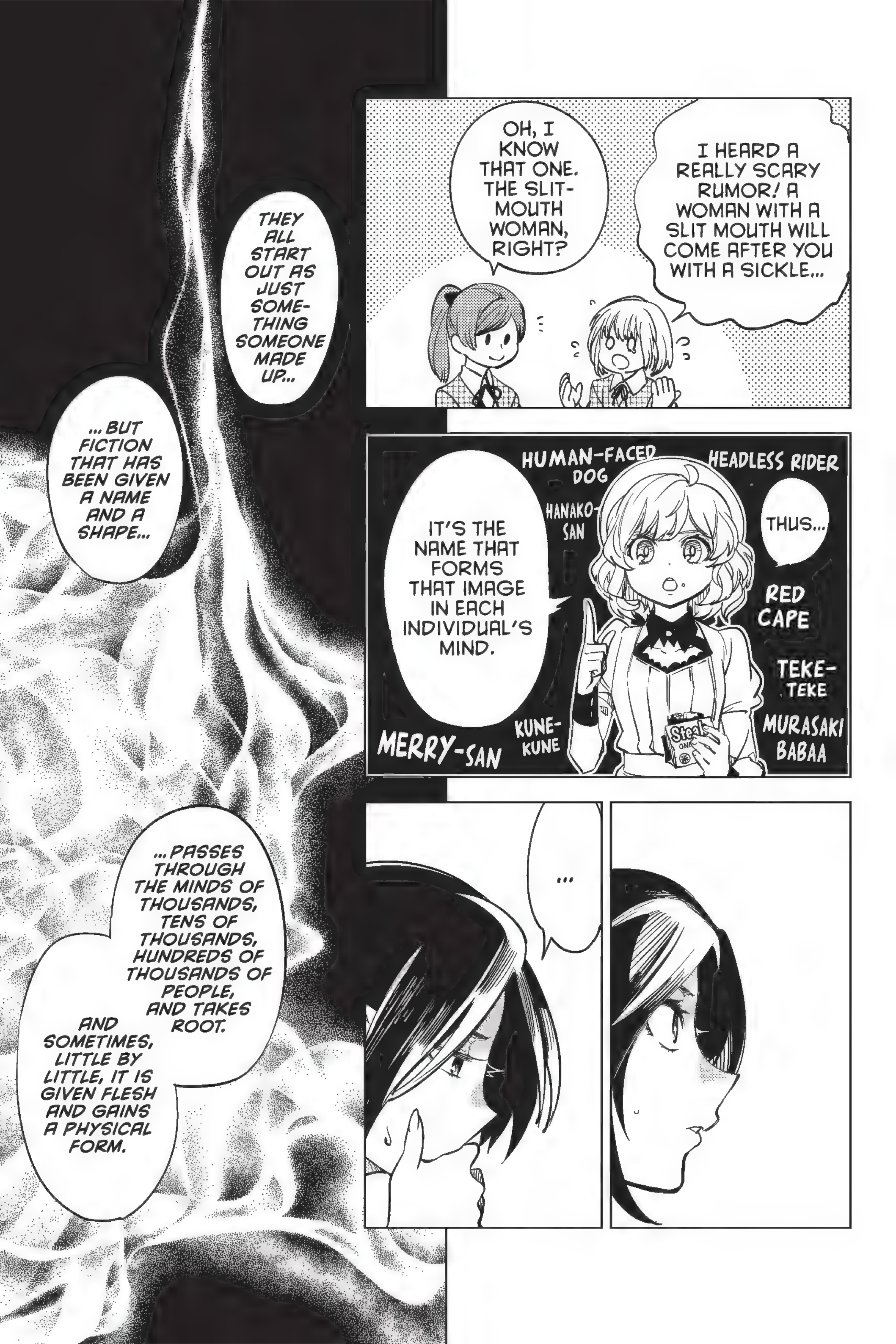

AMONG ALL THE YÔKAI, MONSTERS, GHOSTS, SPOOKS, AND URBAN LEGEND PHANTOMS KNOWN TO MAN,
MORE THAN A FEW ARE MONSTERS OF THE IMAGINATION.

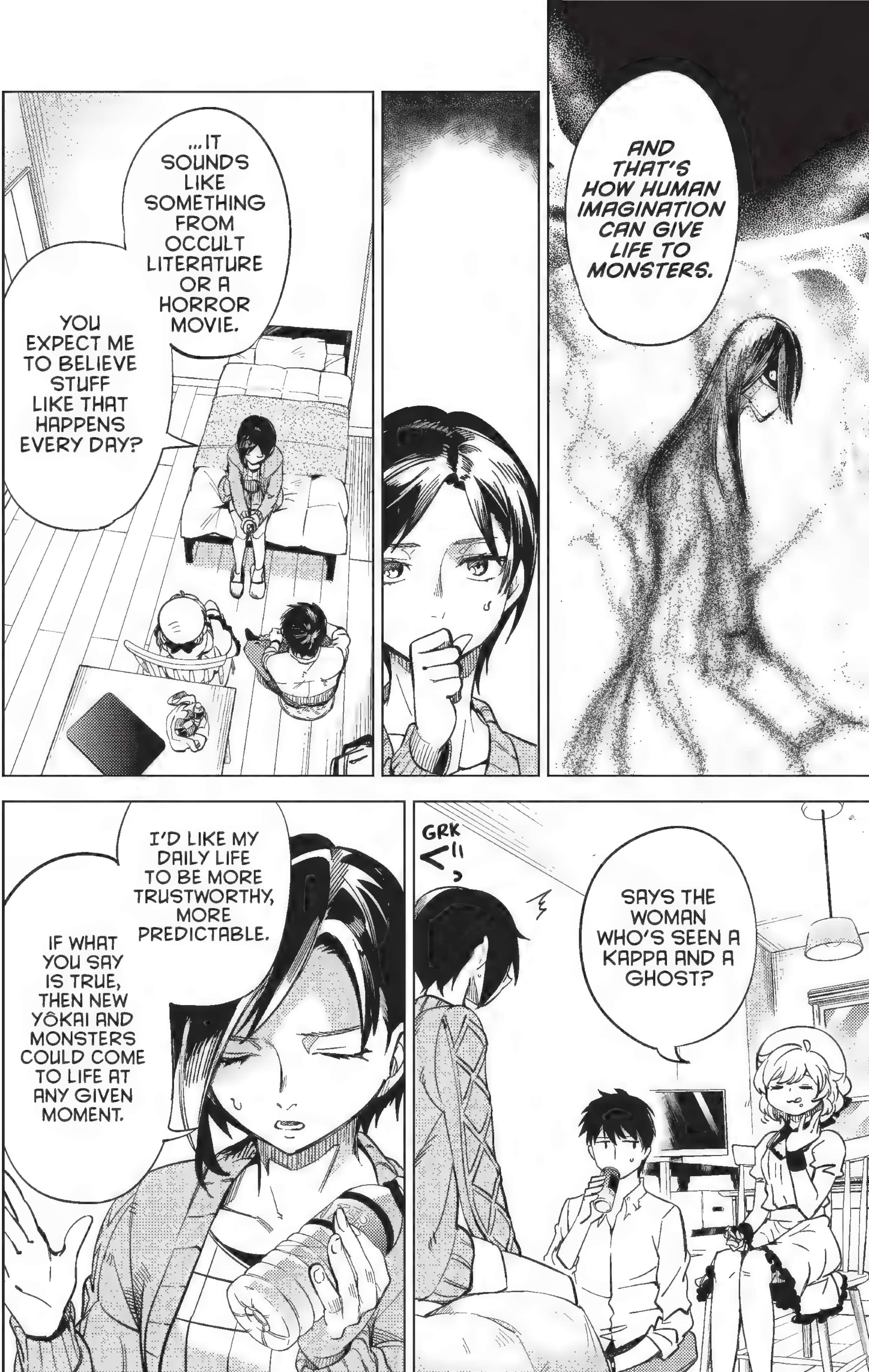

IT MAY START AS SOMETHING SMALL.
FOR EXAMPLE, SOMEONE TELLS A STORY.
"A WOMAN IN A SURGICAL MASK CAME UP TO ME, AND SHE LOOKED KINDA SICK. SO I GOT CREEPED OUT AND RAN AWAY."
AND THEN THEIR FRIEND RESPONDS...
"HUH."
"AND THEN?"
IF THAT WERE IT, THE STORY WOULDN'T BE ALL THAT INTERESTING...
AND THEN...
"WHEN I LOOKED CLOSER, I COULD SEE THAT UNDER HER MASK, HER MOUTH WAS SLIT OPEN...
I GOT SO SCARED, I RAN! BUT SHE CHASED AFTER ME AT LIGHTNING SPEED!"
?!
"WHAT?! THAT'S TERRIFYING!"
GAPE
Aieee!

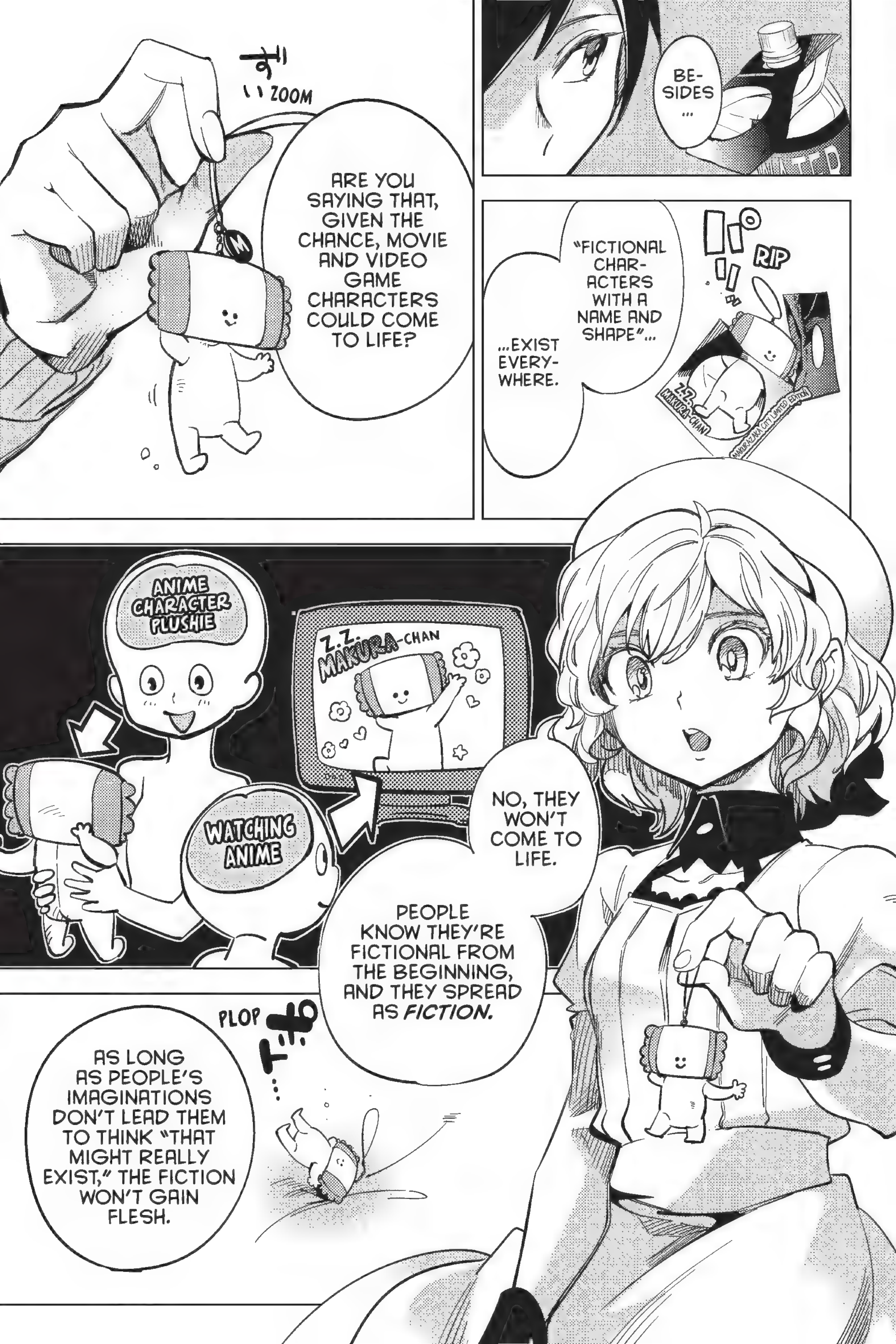

...SO THEY EMBELLISH IT WITH A LIE LIKE THAT. AT THIS POINT, IT'S STILL JUST A PIECE OF FICTION.
EVENTUALLY, THE STORY SPREADS BY WORD OF MOUTH.
A YOUNG WOMAN WITH A MASK...
THE RUMORS SPREAD BEYOND LOCAL BOUNDARIES, ACROSS THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.
SHE ASKS, "AM I PRETTY?"
UNDER THE MASK, HER MOUTH...
EVEN THEN, IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A STORY.
SHE CHASES YOU WITH A SICKLE.
IT'S A LENGTHY COLLECTION OF WORDS WITH NO POWER OR PHYSICAL FORM.
THE PROBLEM IS WHEN IT IS *GIVEN A NAME.*

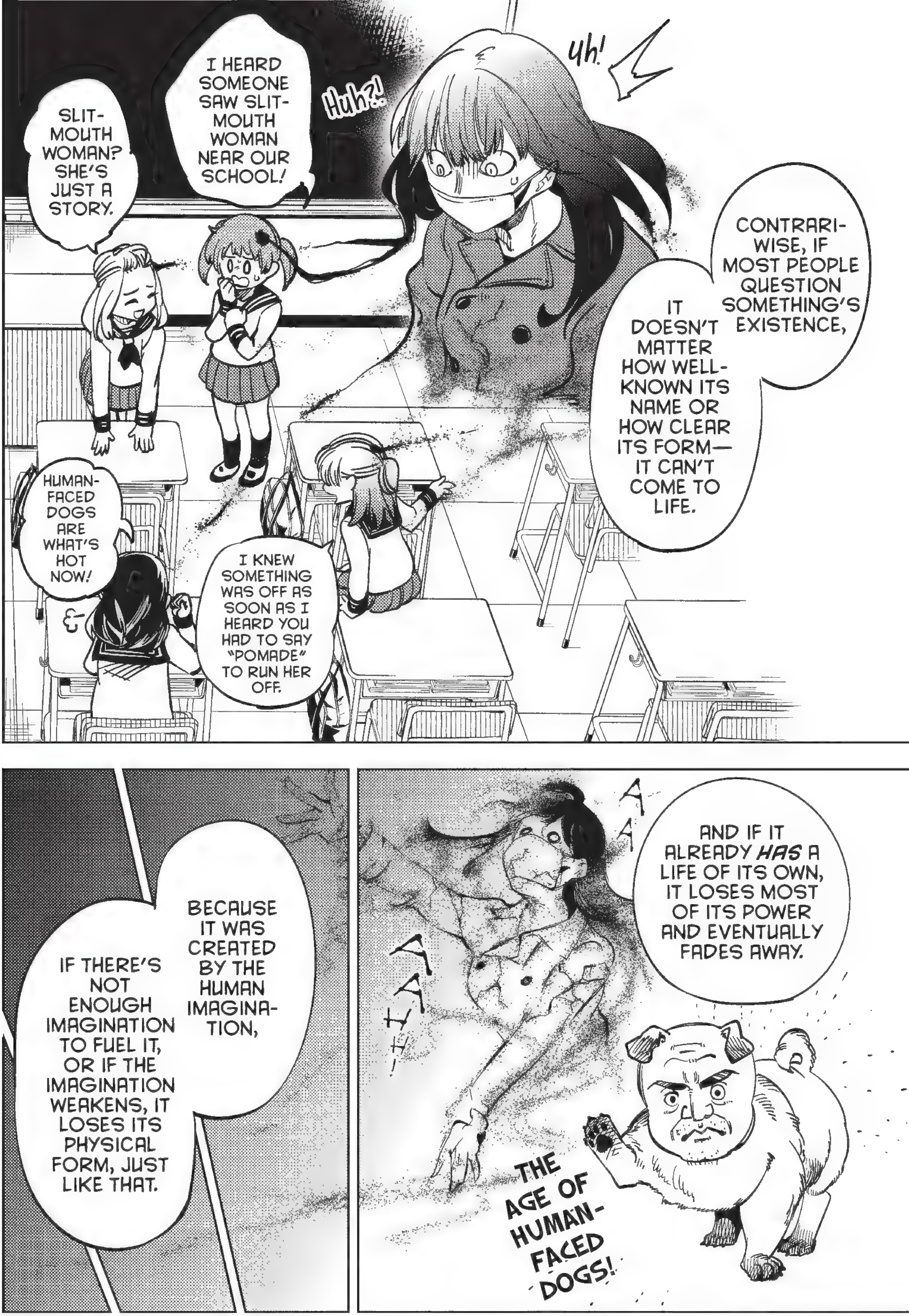
A young woman wearing a surgical mask comes along and asks, "Am I pretty?" If you tell her that she is, she'll take off her mask and say, "What about now?" Under the mask, her mouth is slit open from ear to ear. If you tell her she's not pretty, she'll come after you with a sickle. If you try to run away, she'll come at you with lightning speed and

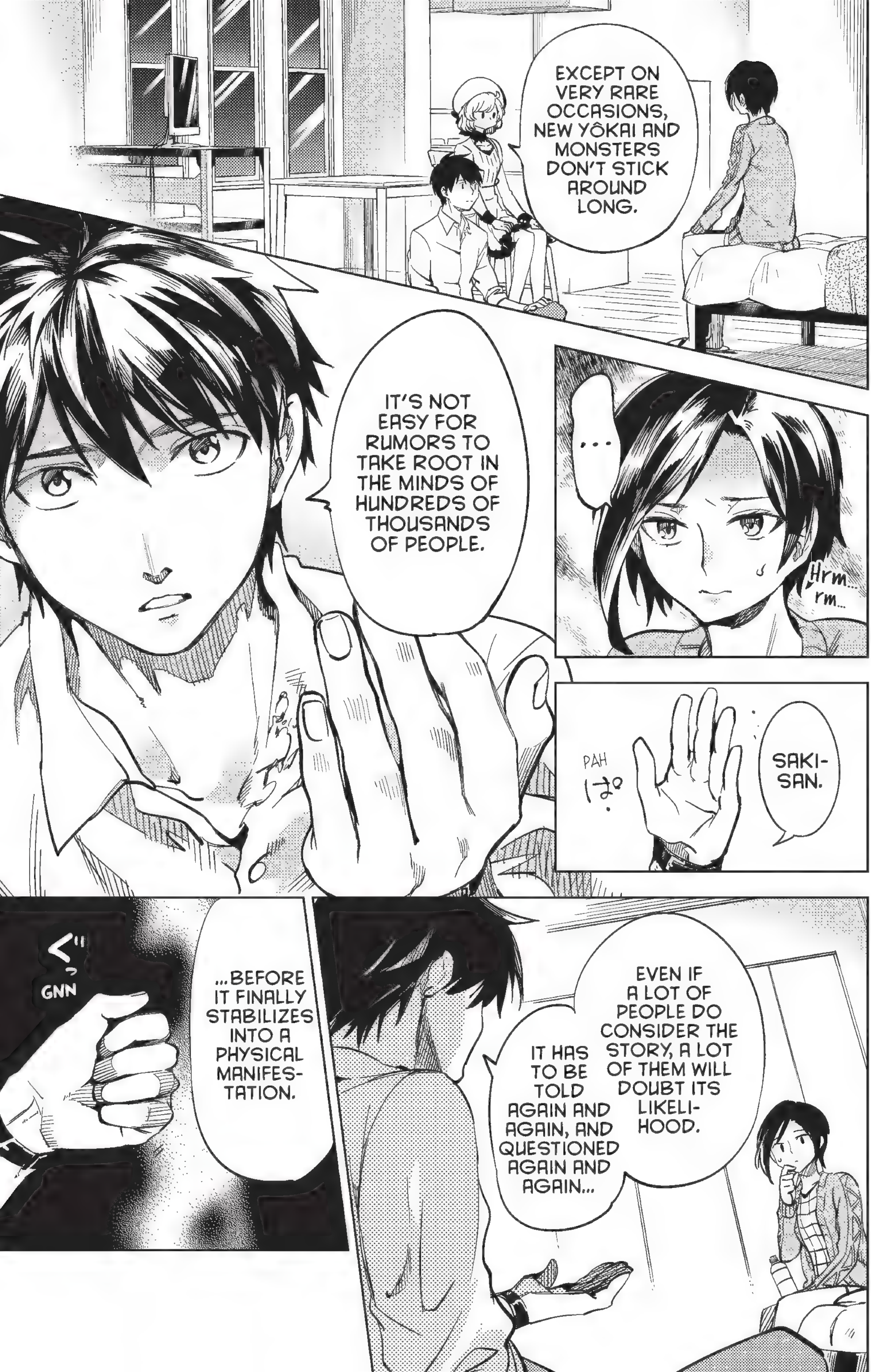

"SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN."
A NAME THAT EXPRESSES THE WHOLE LEGEND, GIVING IT A GENERAL SHAPE IN JUST ONE PHRASE.
THAT SINGLE NAME TAKES ALL THE VAGUE RAMBLINGS, PUTS THEM TOGETHER, AND FORMS THEM INTO ONE SOLID IDEA.
SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN.

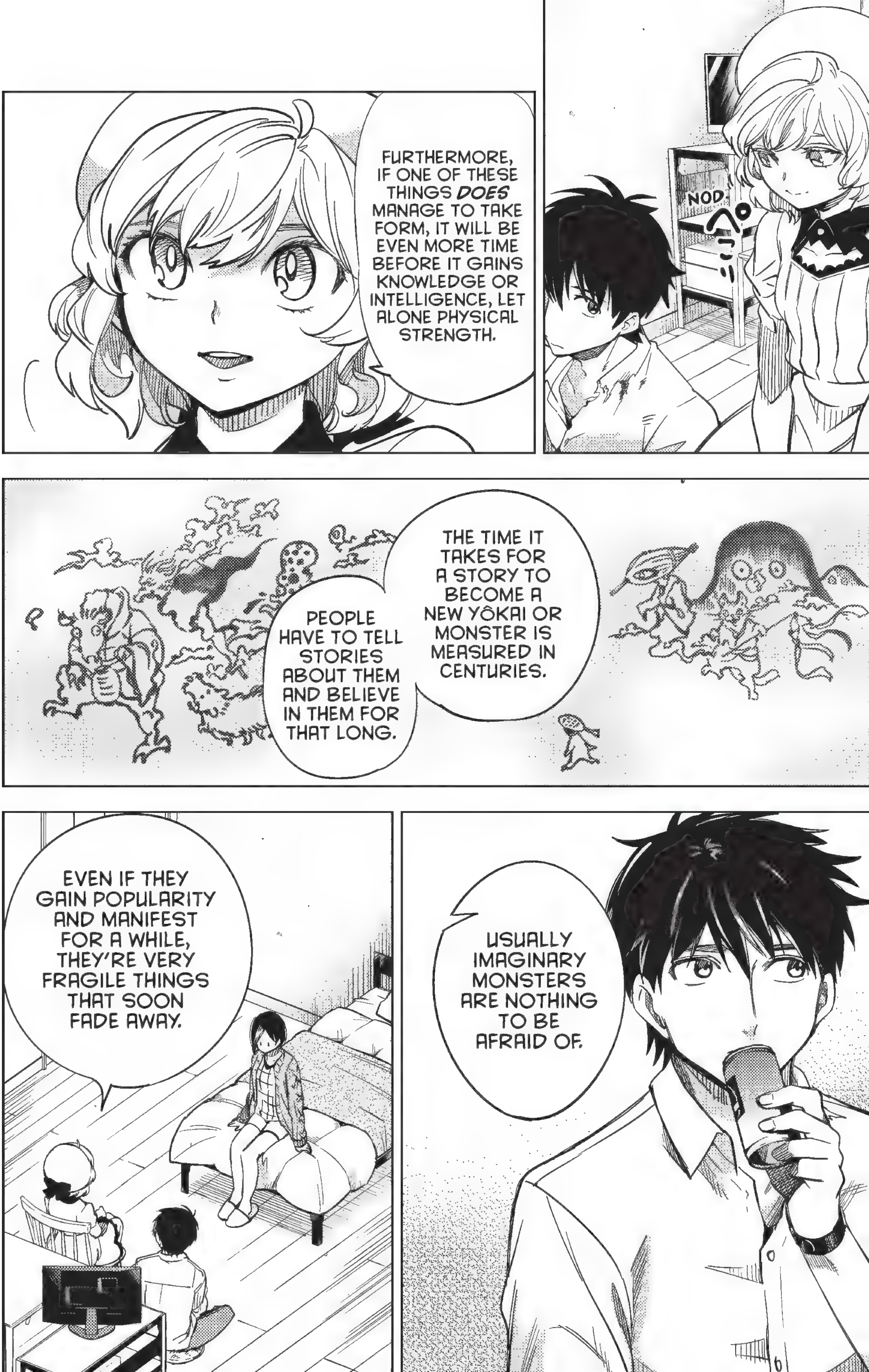

I HEARD A REALLY SCARY RUMOR! A WOMAN WITH A SLIT MOUTH WILL COME AFTER YOU WITH A SICKLE...
OH, I KNOW THAT ONE. THE SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN, RIGHT?
THEY ALL START OUT AS JUST SOMETHING SOMEONE MADE UP...
...BUT FICTION THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN A NAME AND A SHAPE...
HEADLESS RIDER
HUMAN-FACED DOG
HANAKO-SAN
THUS...
IT'S THE NAME THAT FORMS THAT IMAGE IN EACH INDIVIDUAL'S MIND.
RED CAPE
TEKE-TEKE
MURASAKI BABAA
KUNE-KUNE
MERRY-SAN
Steak
...PASSES THROUGH THE MINDS OF THOUSANDS, TENS OF THOUSANDS, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, AND TAKES ROOT.
AND SOMETIMES, LITTLE BY LITTLE, IT IS GIVEN FLESH AND GAINS A PHYSICAL FORM.
...

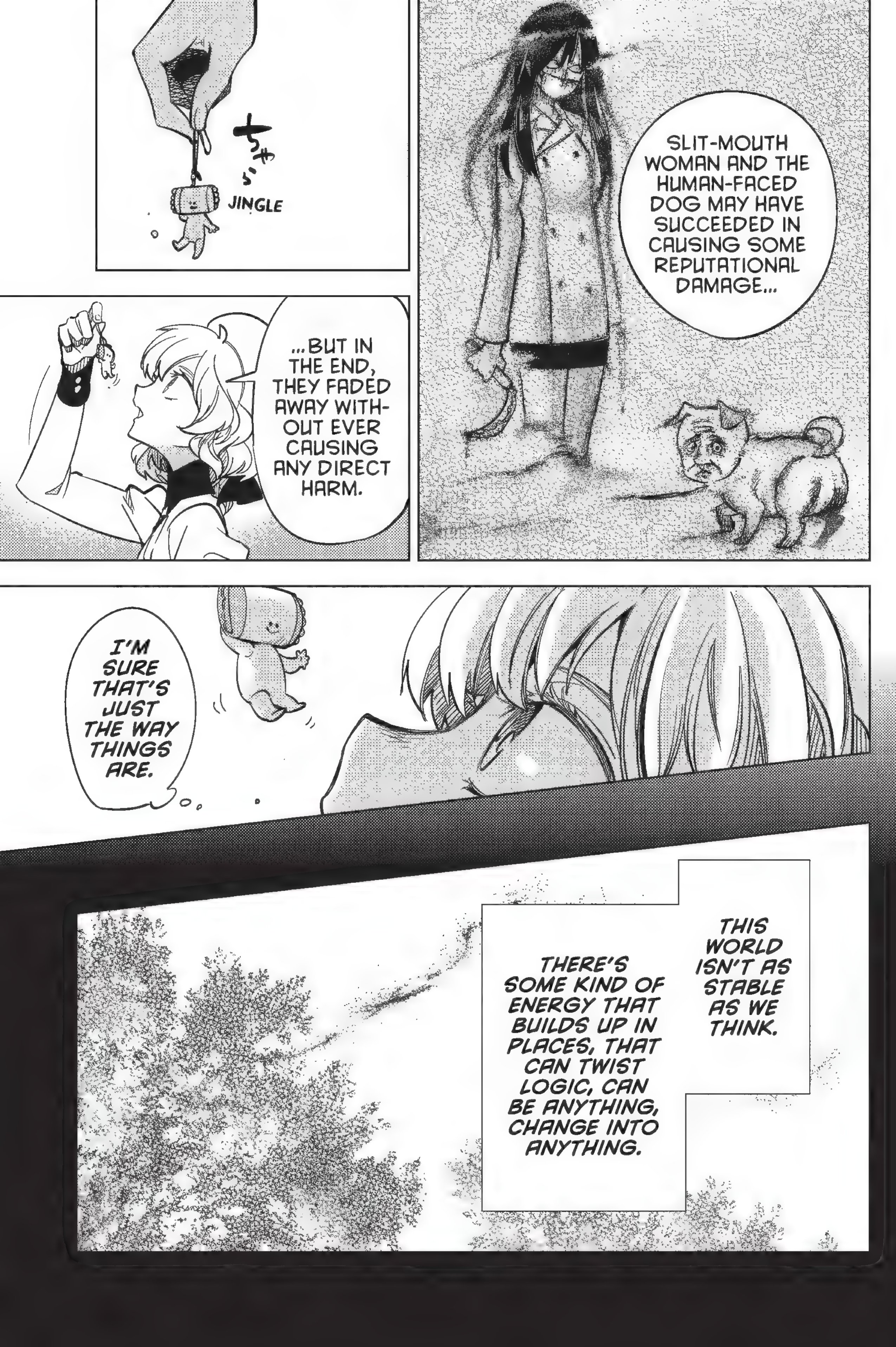

AND THAT'S HOW HUMAN IMAGINATION CAN GIVE LIFE TO MONSTERS.
...IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING FROM OCCULT LITERATURE OR A HORROR MOVIE.
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE STUFF LIKE THAT HAPPENS EVERY DAY?
GRK
SAYS THE WOMAN WHO'S SEEN A KAPPA AND A GHOST?
I'D LIKE MY DAILY LIFE TO BE MORE TRUSTWORTHY, MORE PREDICTABLE.
IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, THEN NEW YÔKAI AND MONSTERS COULD COME TO LIFE AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT.

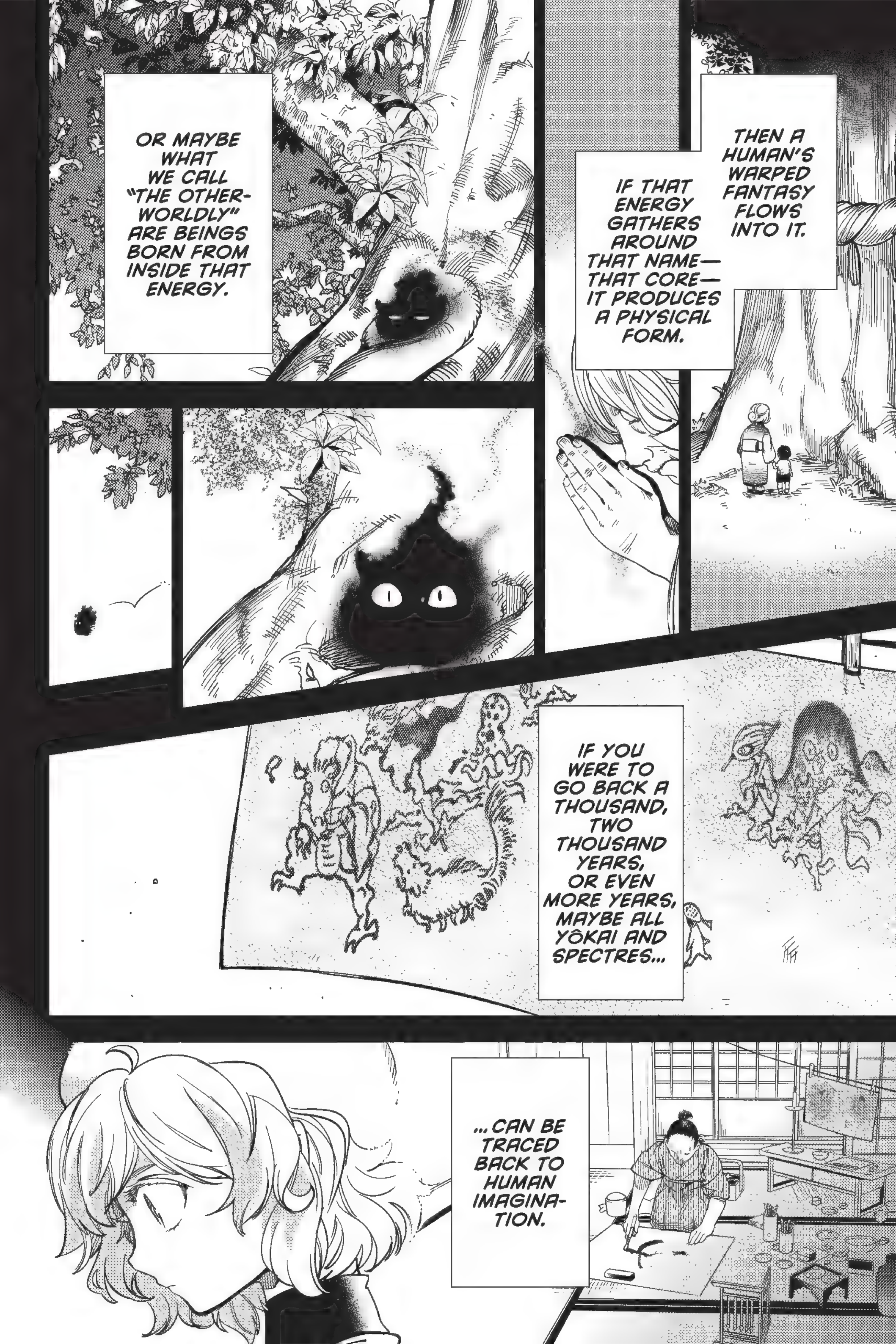

BE-SIDES...
"FICTIONAL CHARACTERS WITH A NAME AND SHAPE"...
...EXIST EVERYWHERE.
RIP
Z.Z. MAKURA-CHAN!
MAKURAZAKA CITY LIMITED EDITION
ZOOM
ARE YOU SAYING THAT, GIVEN THE CHANCE, MOVIE AND VIDEO GAME CHARACTERS COULD COME TO LIFE?
ANIME CHARACTER PLUSHIE
Z.Z. MAKURA-CHAN
WATCHING ANIME
NO, THEY WON'T COME TO LIFE.
PEOPLE KNOW THEY'RE FICTIONAL FROM THE BEGINNING, AND THEY SPREAD AS *FICTION.*
PLOP
AS LONG AS PEOPLE'S IMAGINATIONS DON'T LEAD THEM TO THINK "THAT MIGHT REALLY EXIST," THE FICTION WON'T GAIN FLESH.

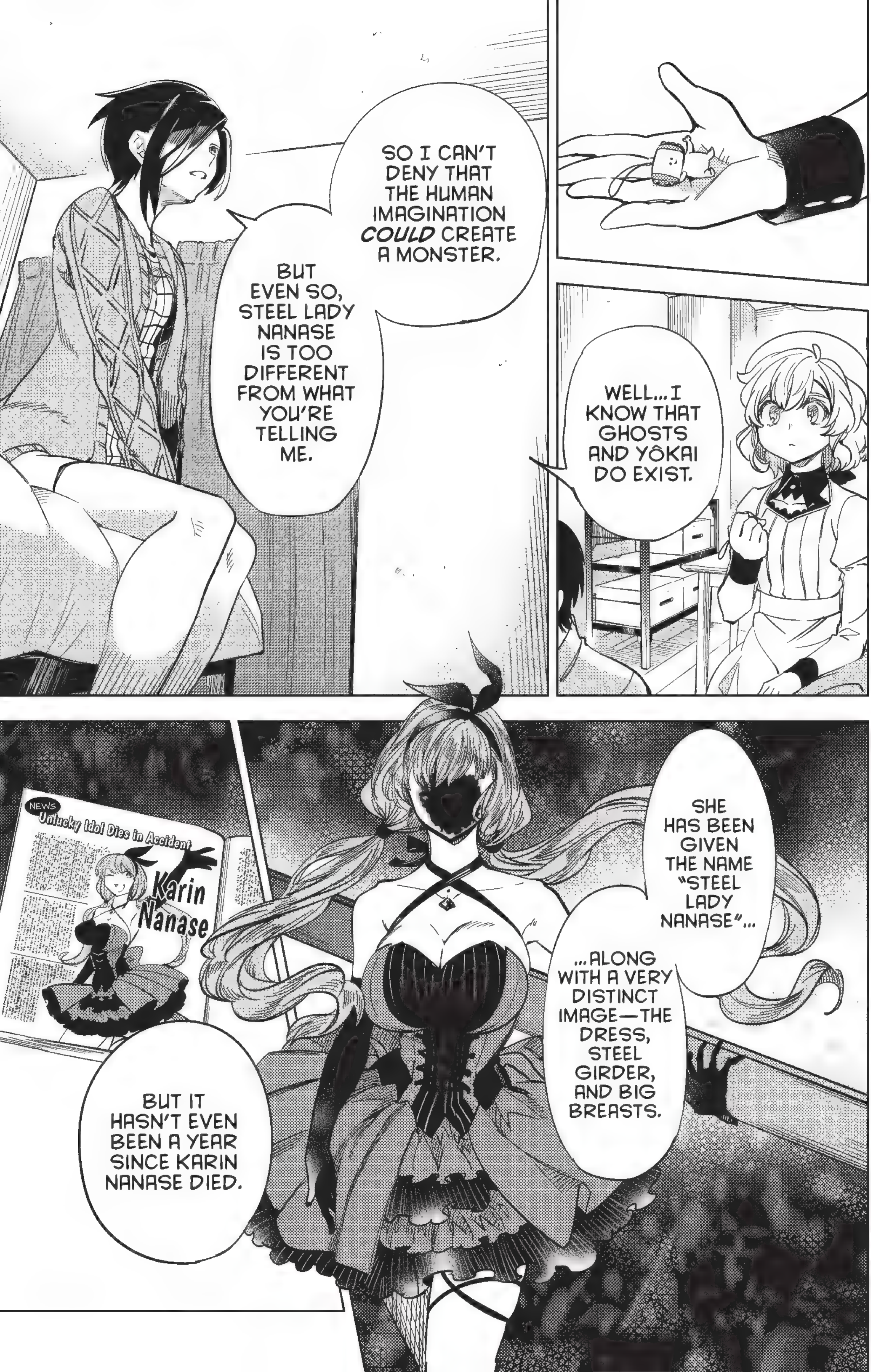

Uh!
Huh?!
I HEARD SOMEONE SAW SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN NEAR OUR SCHOOL!
SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN? SHE'S JUST A STORY.
CONTRARIWISE, IF MOST PEOPLE QUESTION SOMETHING'S EXISTENCE,
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW WELL-KNOWN ITS NAME OR HOW CLEAR ITS FORM—IT CAN'T COME TO LIFE.
I KNEW SOMETHING WAS OFF AS SOON AS I HEARD YOU HAD TO SAY "POMADE" TO RUN HER OFF.
HUMAN-FACED DOGS ARE WHAT'S HOT NOW!
AND IF IT ALREADY *HAS* A LIFE OF ITS OWN, IT LOSES MOST OF ITS POWER AND EVENTUALLY FADES AWAY.
AAAAAAH!
THE AGE OF HUMAN-FACED DOGS!
BECAUSE IT WAS CREATED BY THE HUMAN IMAGINATION,
IF THERE'S NOT ENOUGH IMAGINATION TO FUEL IT, OR IF THE IMAGINATION WEAKENS, IT LOSES ITS PHYSICAL FORM, JUST LIKE THAT.

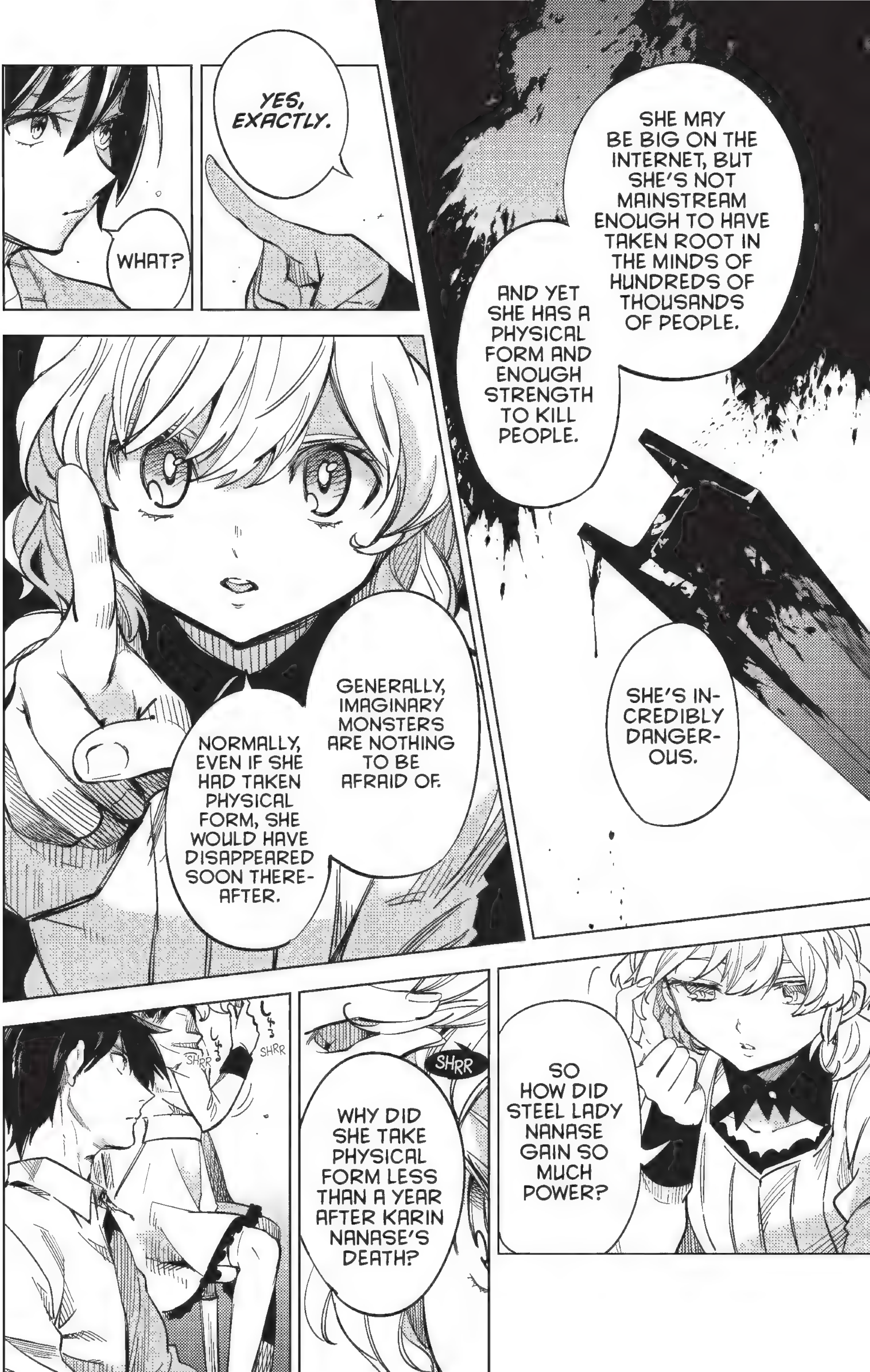

EXCEPT ON VERY RARE OCCASIONS, NEW YÔKAI AND MONSTERS DON'T STICK AROUND LONG.
...
Hrm... rm...
IT'S NOT EASY FOR RUMORS TO TAKE ROOT IN THE MINDS OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE.
SAKI-SAN.
PAH
はっ
EVEN IF A LOT OF PEOPLE DO CONSIDER THE STORY, A LOT OF THEM WILL DOUBT ITS LIKELIHOOD.
IT HAS TO BE TOLD AGAIN AND AGAIN, AND QUESTIONED AGAIN AND AGAIN...
...BEFORE IT FINALLY STABILIZES INTO A PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION.
ぐっ
GNN

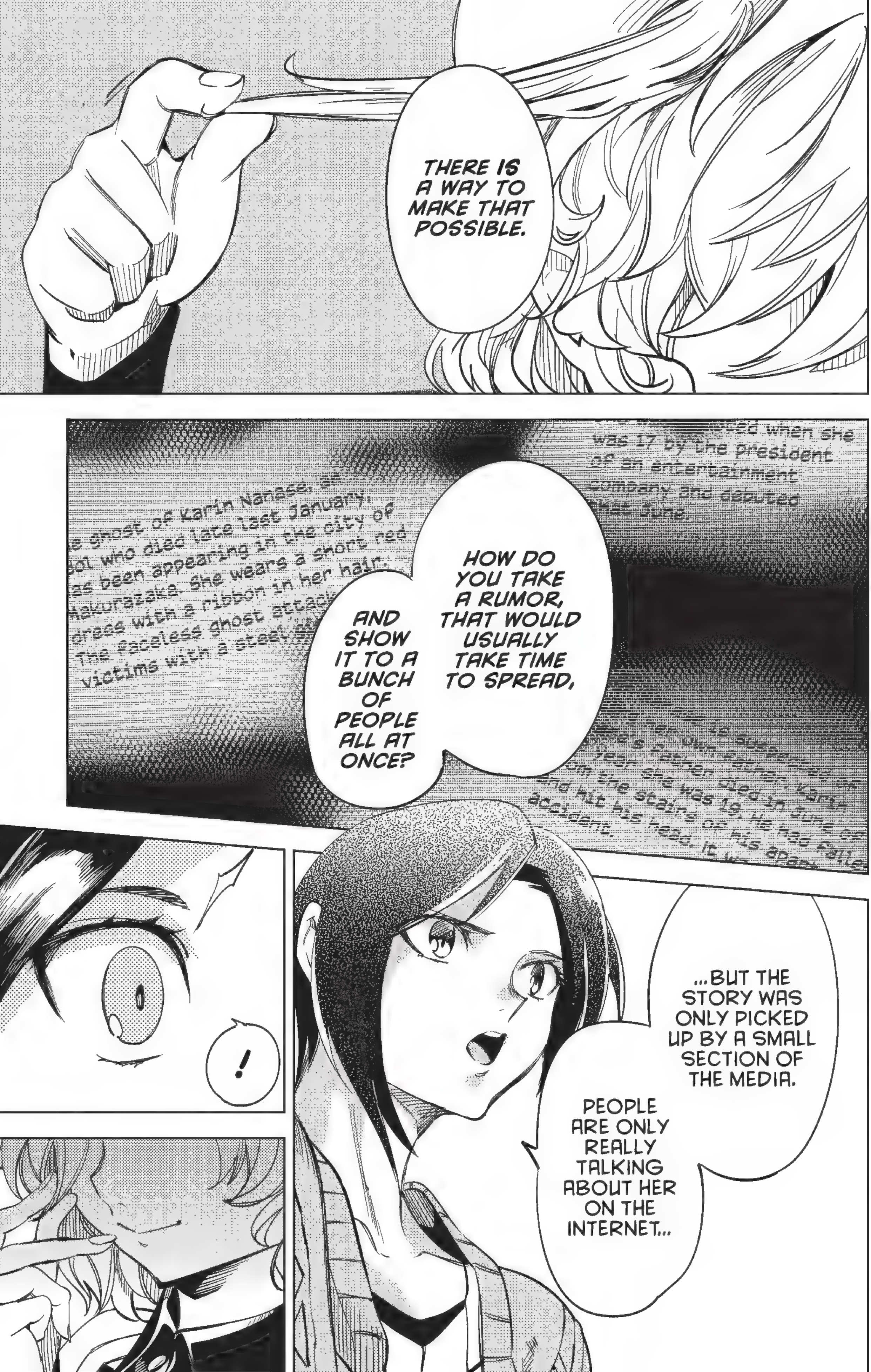

NOD
FURTHERMORE, IF ONE OF THESE THINGS *DOES* MANAGE TO TAKE FORM, IT WILL BE EVEN MORE TIME BEFORE IT GAINS KNOWLEDGE OR INTELLIGENCE, LET ALONE PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
THE TIME IT TAKES FOR A STORY TO BECOME A NEW YÔKAI OR MONSTER IS MEASURED IN CENTURIES.
PEOPLE HAVE TO TELL STORIES ABOUT THEM AND BELIEVE IN THEM FOR THAT LONG.
USUALLY IMAGINARY MONSTERS ARE NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
EVEN IF THEY GAIN POPULARITY AND MANIFEST FOR A WHILE, THEY'RE VERY FRAGILE THINGS THAT SOON FADE AWAY.

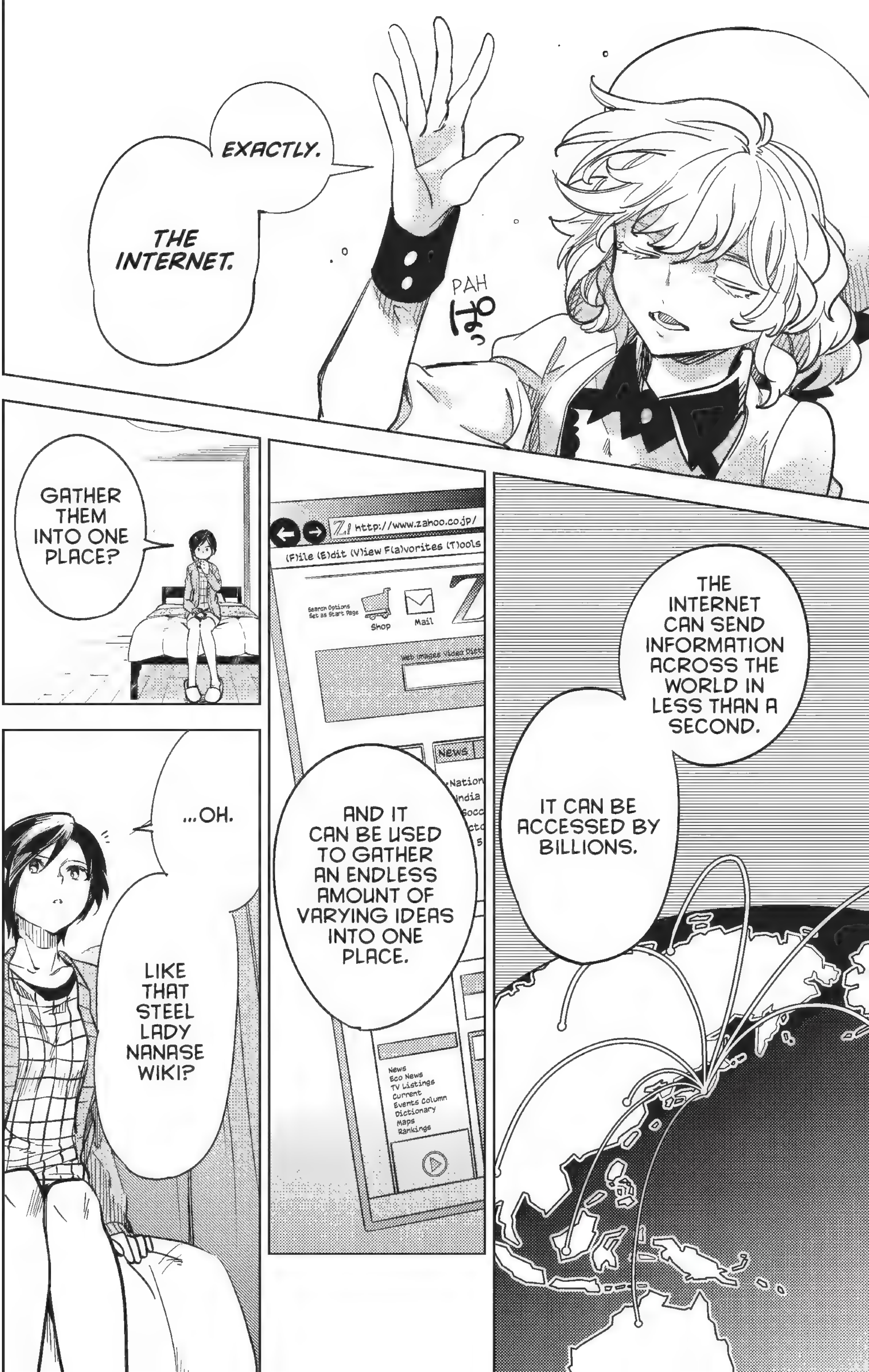

SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN AND THE HUMAN-FACED DOG MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CAUSING SOME REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE...
ちゃら
JINGLE
...BUT IN THE END, THEY FADED AWAY WITHOUT EVER CAUSING ANY DIRECT HARM.
I'M SURE THAT'S JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE.
THIS WORLD ISN'T AS STABLE AS WE THINK.
THERE'S SOME KIND OF ENERGY THAT BUILDS UP IN PLACES, THAT CAN TWIST LOGIC, CAN BE ANYTHING, CHANGE INTO ANYTHING.

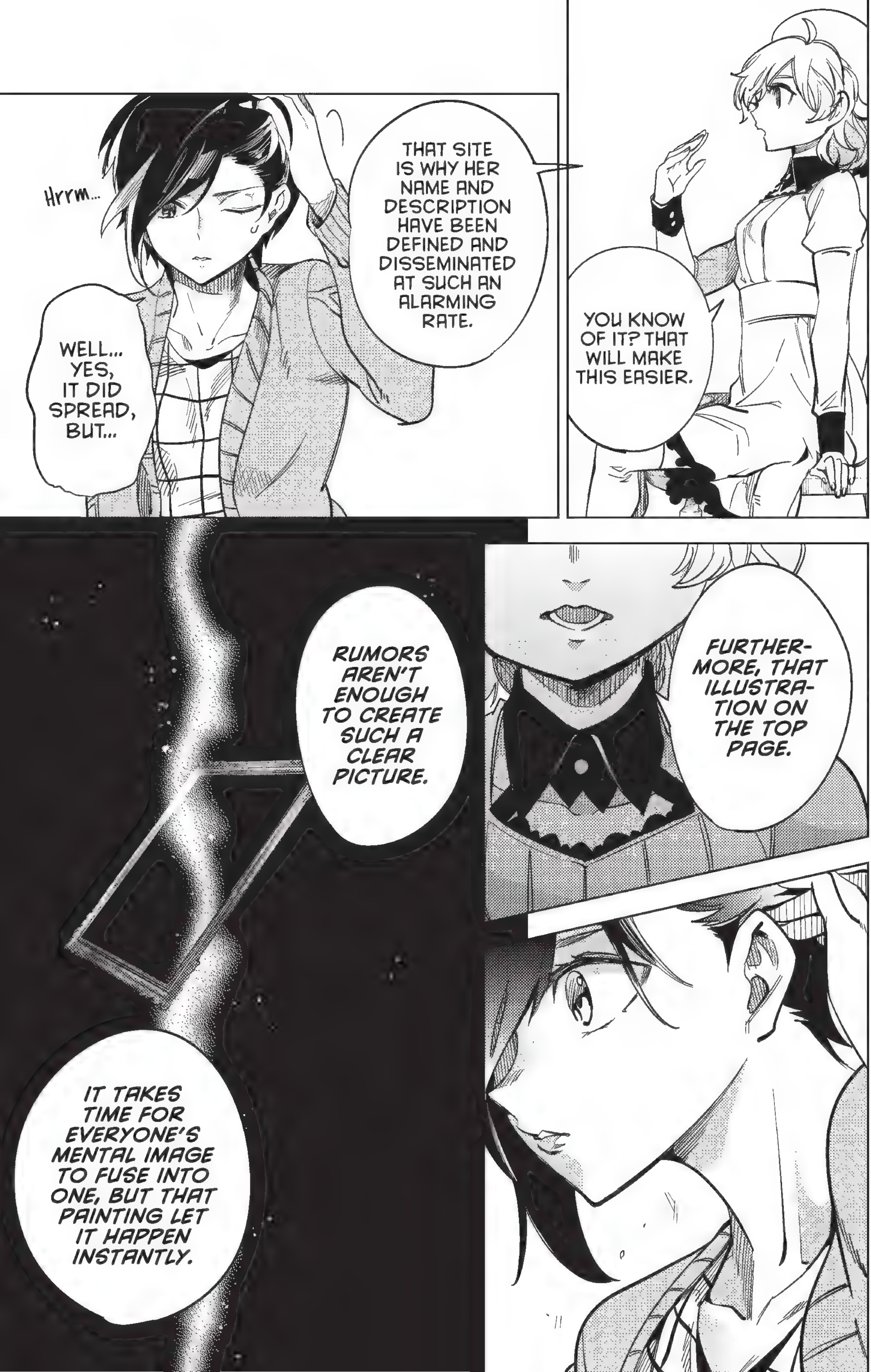

OR MAYBE WHAT WE CALL "THE OTHERWORLDLY" ARE BEINGS BORN FROM INSIDE THAT ENERGY.
IF THAT ENERGY GATHERS AROUND THAT NAME—THAT CORE—IT PRODUCES A PHYSICAL FORM.
THEN A HUMAN'S WARPED FANTASY FLOWS INTO IT.
...
IF YOU WERE TO GO BACK A THOUSAND, TWO THOUSAND YEARS, OR EVEN MORE YEARS, MAYBE ALL YÔKAI AND SPECTRES...
...CAN BE TRACED BACK TO HUMAN IMAGINATION.

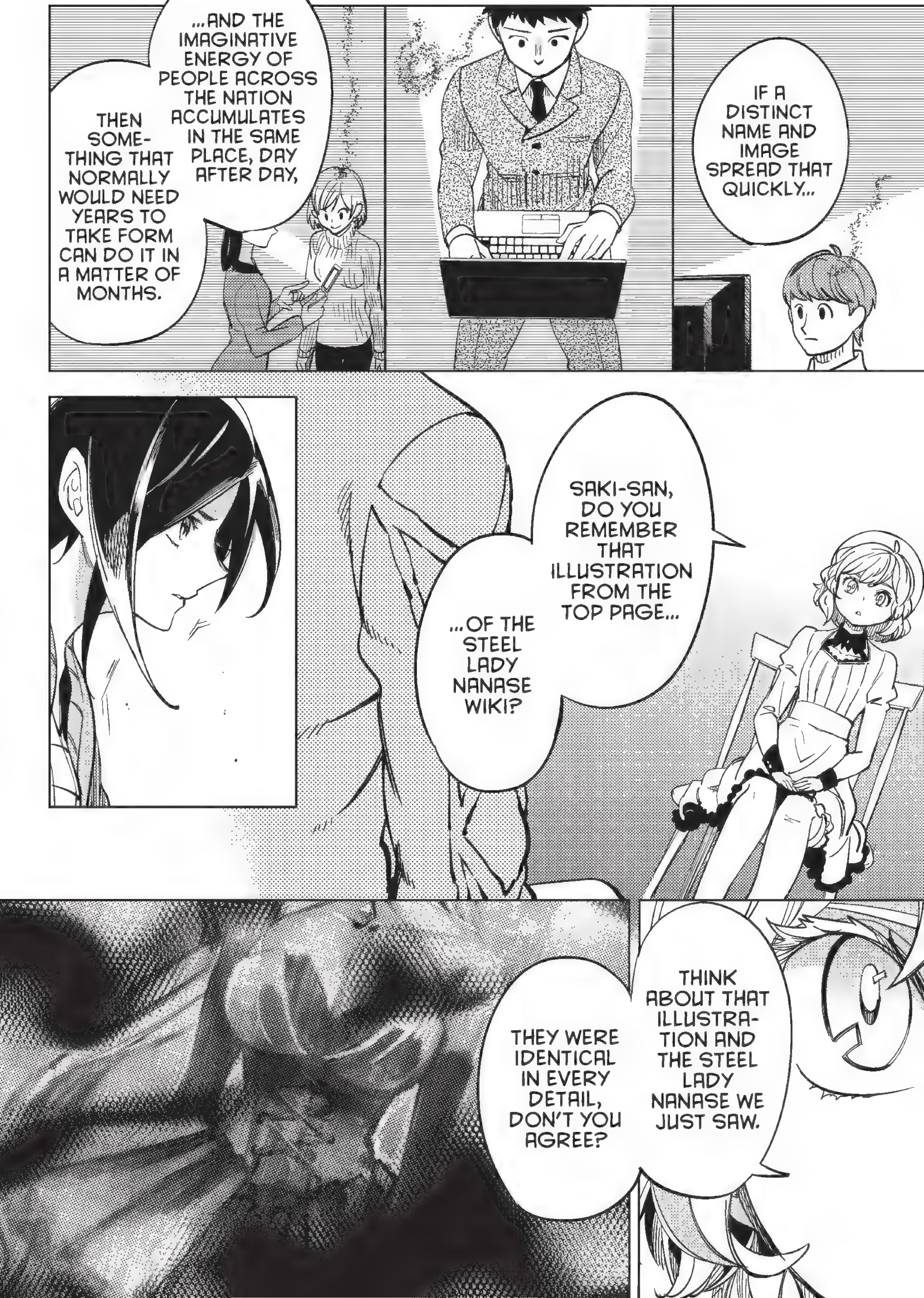

WELL...I KNOW THAT GHOSTS AND YÔKAI DO EXIST.
SO I CAN'T DENY THAT THE HUMAN IMAGINATION *COULD* CREATE A MONSTER.
BUT EVEN SO, STEEL LADY NANASE IS TOO DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME.
SHE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE NAME "STEEL LADY NANASE"...
...ALONG WITH A VERY DISTINCT IMAGE—THE DRESS, STEEL GIRDER, AND BIG BREASTS.
BUT IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN A YEAR SINCE KARIN NANASE DIED.
NEWS
Unlucky Idol Dies in Accident
Karin Nanase

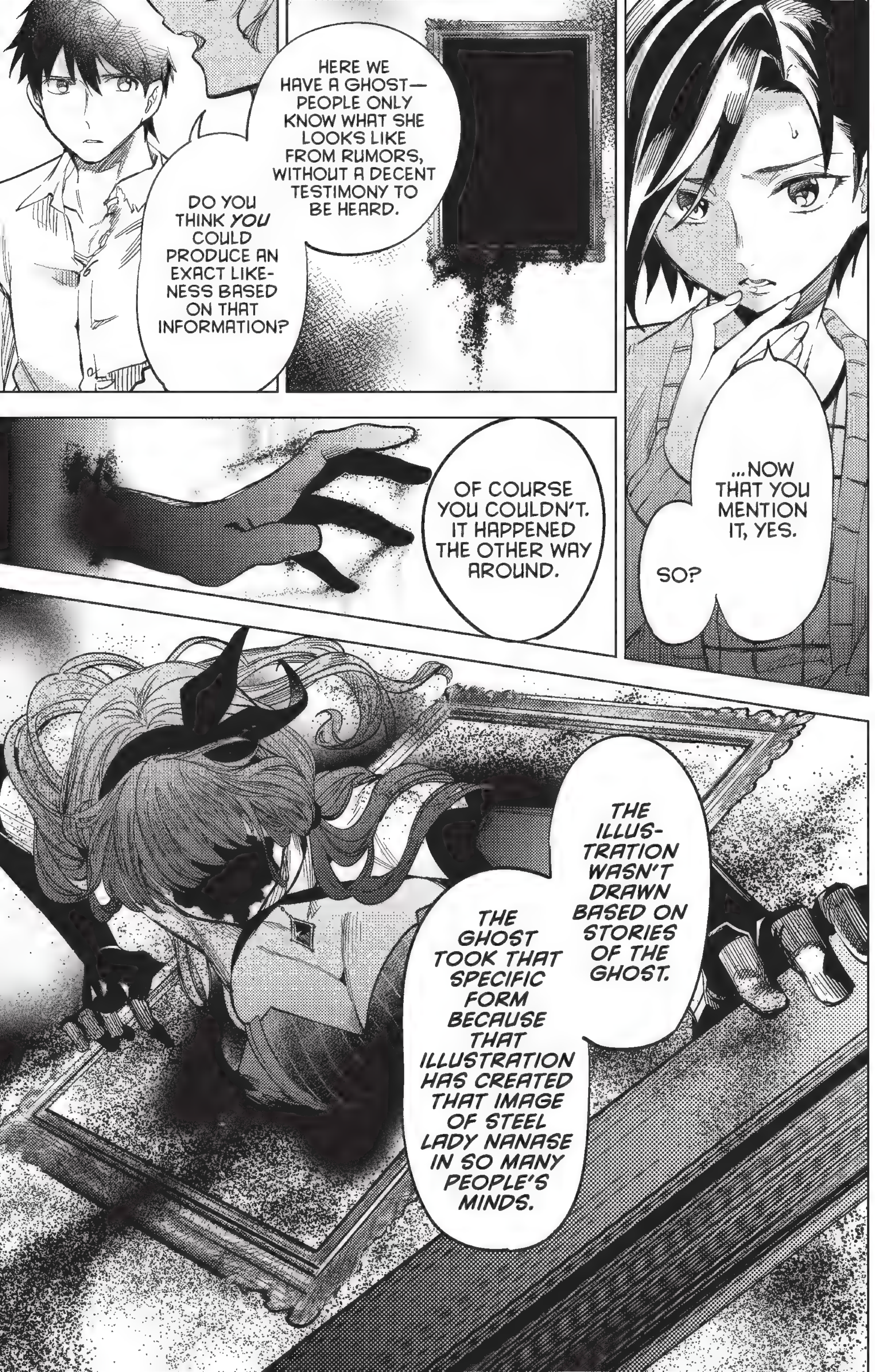

YES, EXACTLY.
WHAT?
GENERALLY, IMAGINARY MONSTERS ARE NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
NORMALLY, EVEN IF SHE HAD TAKEN PHYSICAL FORM, SHE WOULD HAVE DISAPPEARED SOON THEREAFTER.
SHE MAY BE BIG ON THE INTERNET, BUT SHE'S NOT MAINSTREAM ENOUGH TO HAVE TAKEN ROOT IN THE MINDS OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE.
AND YET SHE HAS A PHYSICAL FORM AND ENOUGH STRENGTH TO KILL PEOPLE.
SHE'S INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS.
SO HOW DID STEEL LADY NANASE GAIN SO MUCH POWER?
SHRR
WHY DID SHE TAKE PHYSICAL FORM LESS THAN A YEAR AFTER KARIN NANASE'S DEATH?
しゅる
SHRR
しゅる
SHRR

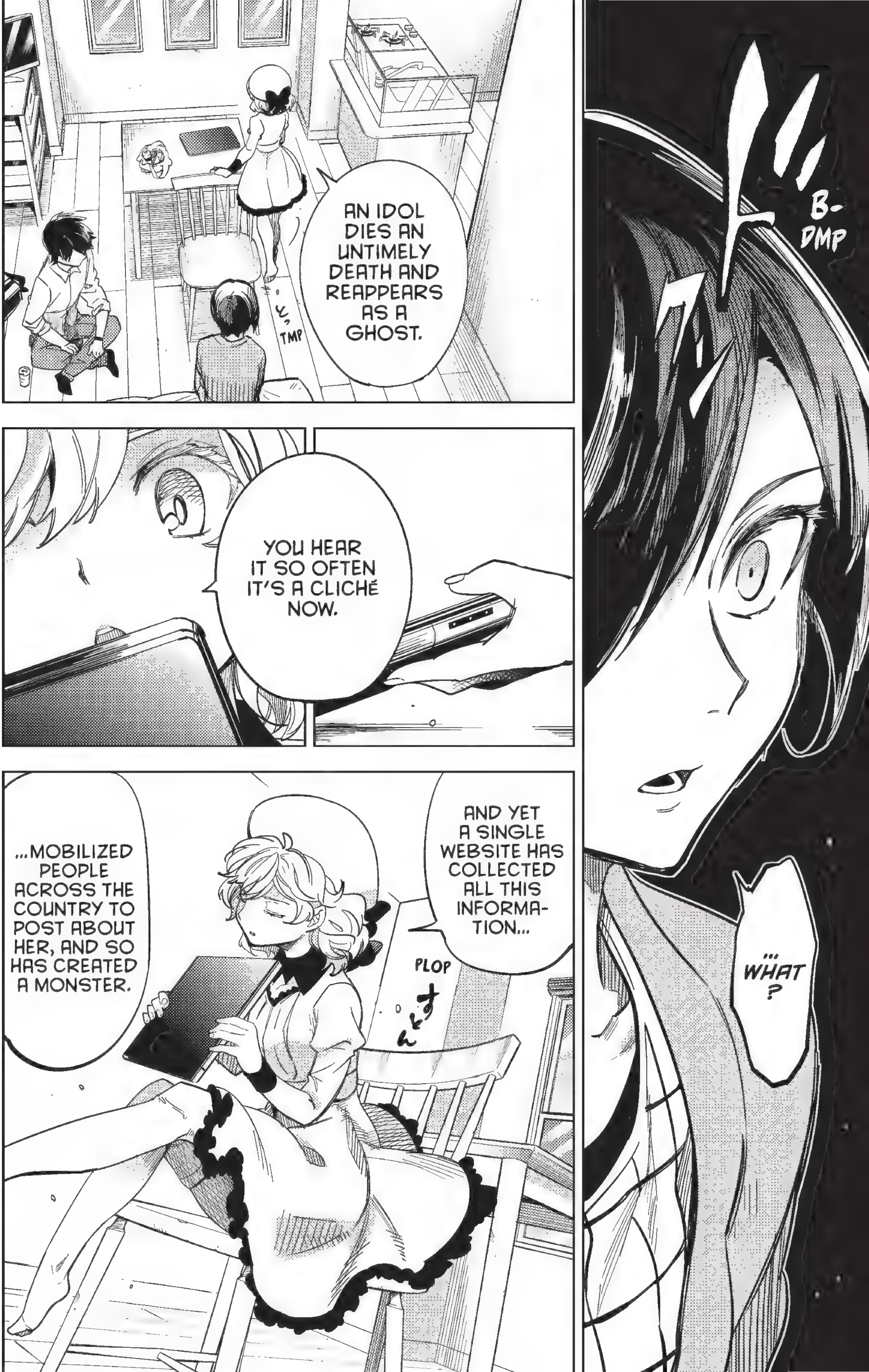

THERE IS A WAY TO MAKE THAT POSSIBLE.
was 17 by the president of an entertainment company and debuted that June.
e ghost of Karin Nanase, at ol who died late last January, as been appearing in the city of Makurazaka. She wears a short red dress with a ribbon in her hair. The faceless ghost attack victims with a steel
HOW DO YOU TAKE A RUMOR, THAT WOULD USUALLY TAKE TIME TO SPREAD,
AND SHOW IT TO A BUNCH OF PEOPLE ALL AT ONCE?
is suspected of her own father. Karin's father died in June of year she was 19. He had fallen om the stairs of his apart and hit his head. It was accident.
!
...BUT THE STORY WAS ONLY PICKED UP BY A SMALL SECTION OF THE MEDIA.
PEOPLE ARE ONLY REALLY TALKING ABOUT HER ON THE INTERNET...

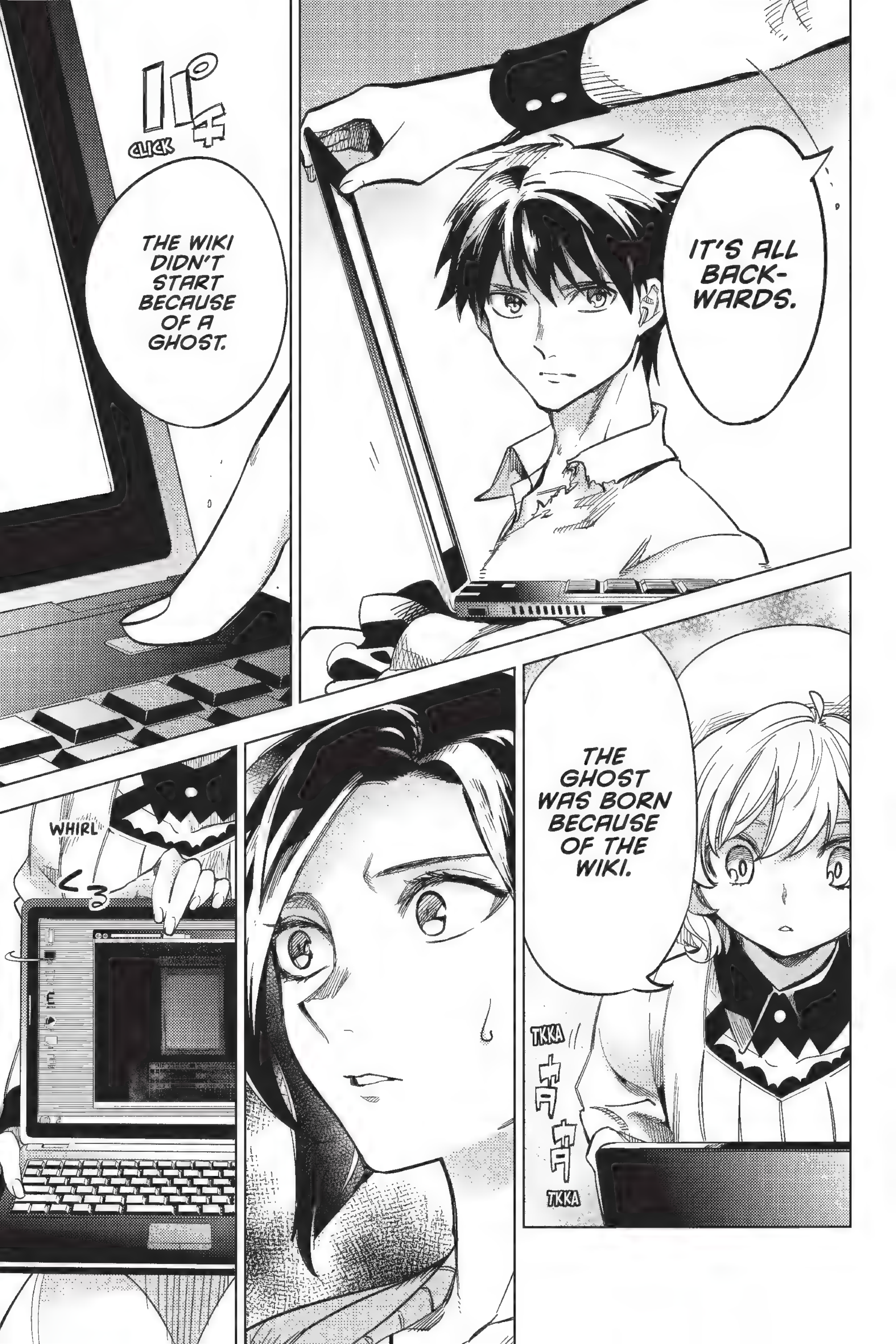

EXACTLY.
THE INTERNET.
PAH
ぱっ
THE INTERNET CAN SEND INFORMATION ACROSS THE WORLD IN LESS THAN A SECOND.
IT CAN BE ACCESSED BY BILLIONS.
AND IT CAN BE USED TO GATHER AN ENDLESS AMOUNT OF VARYING IDEAS INTO ONE PLACE.
Z! http://www.zahoo.co.jp/
(F)ile (E)dit (V)iew F(a)vorites (T)ools
Search Options
Set as Start Page
Shop
Mail
News
Nation
India
News
Eco News
TV Listings
Current
Events Column
Dictionary
Maps
Rankings
GATHER THEM INTO ONE PLACE?
...OH.
LIKE THAT STEEL LADY NANASE WIKI?

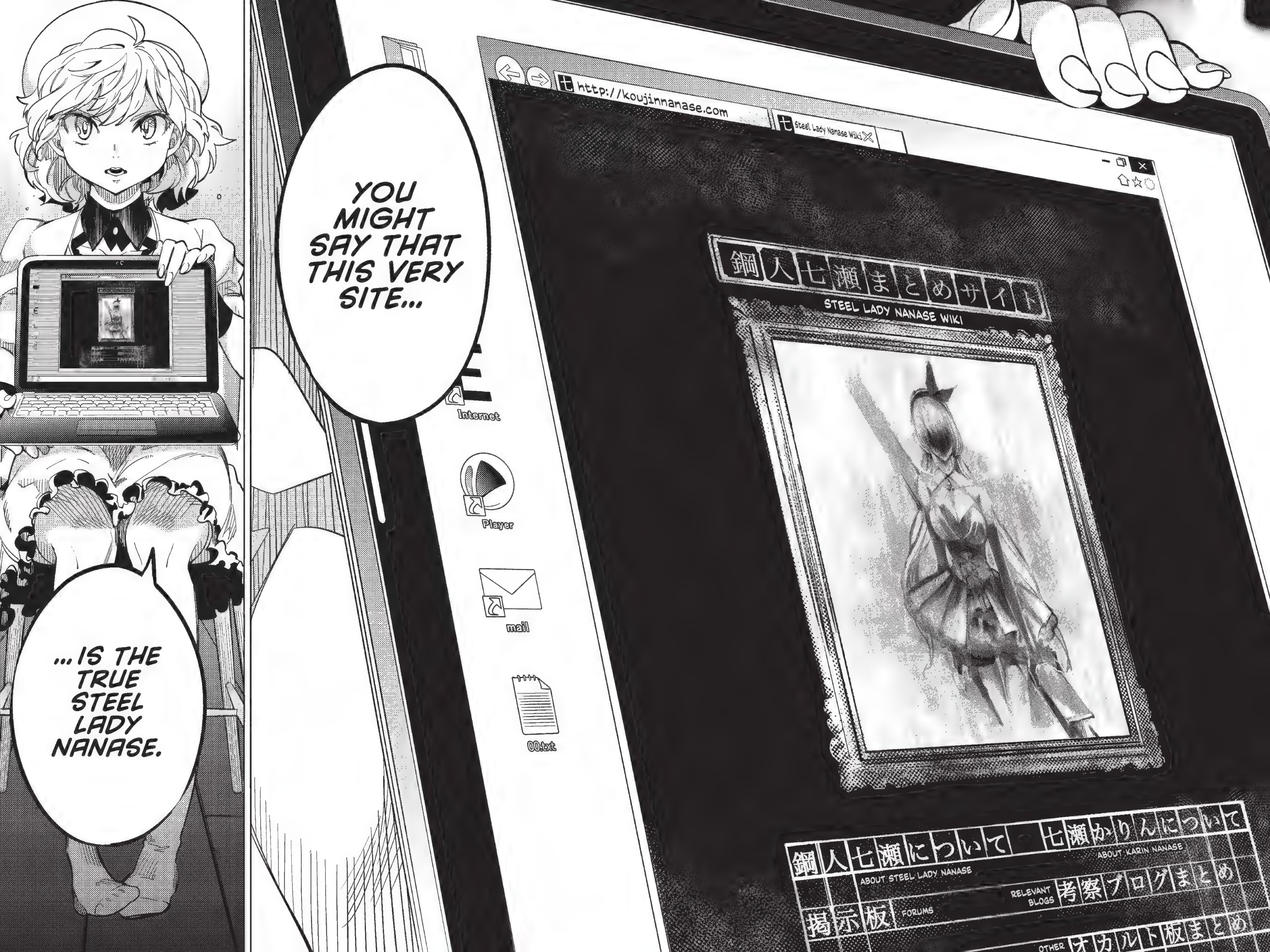

YOU KNOW OF IT? THAT WILL MAKE THIS EASIER.
THAT SITE IS WHY HER NAME AND DESCRIPTION HAVE BEEN DEFINED AND DISSEMINATED AT SUCH AN ALARMING RATE.
Hrrm...
WELL... YES, IT DID SPREAD, BUT...
FURTHERMORE, THAT ILLUSTRATION ON THE TOP PAGE.
RUMORS AREN'T ENOUGH TO CREATE SUCH A CLEAR PICTURE.
IT TAKES TIME FOR EVERYONE'S MENTAL IMAGE TO FUSE INTO ONE, BUT THAT PAINTING LET IT HAPPEN INSTANTLY.

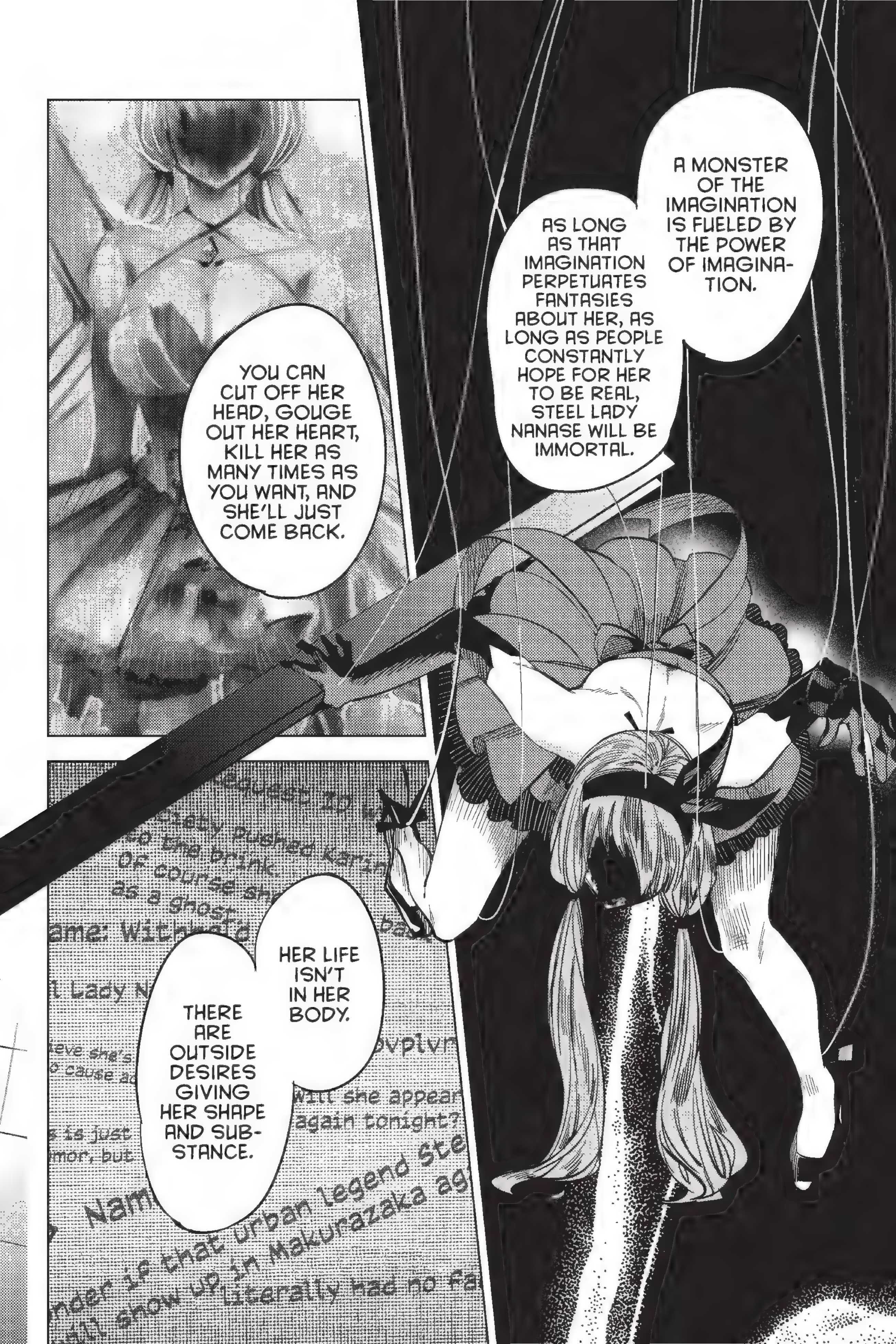

IF A DISTINCT NAME AND IMAGE SPREAD THAT QUICKLY...
...AND THE IMAGINATIVE ENERGY OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE NATION ACCUMULATES IN THE SAME PLACE, DAY AFTER DAY,
THEN SOMETHING THAT NORMALLY WOULD NEED YEARS TO TAKE FORM CAN DO IT IN A MATTER OF MONTHS.
SAKI-SAN, DO YOU REMEMBER THAT ILLUSTRATION FROM THE TOP PAGE...
...OF THE STEEL LADY NANASE WIKI?
THINK ABOUT THAT ILLUSTRATION AND THE STEEL LADY NANASE WE JUST SAW.
THEY WERE IDENTICAL IN EVERY DETAIL, DON'T YOU AGREE?

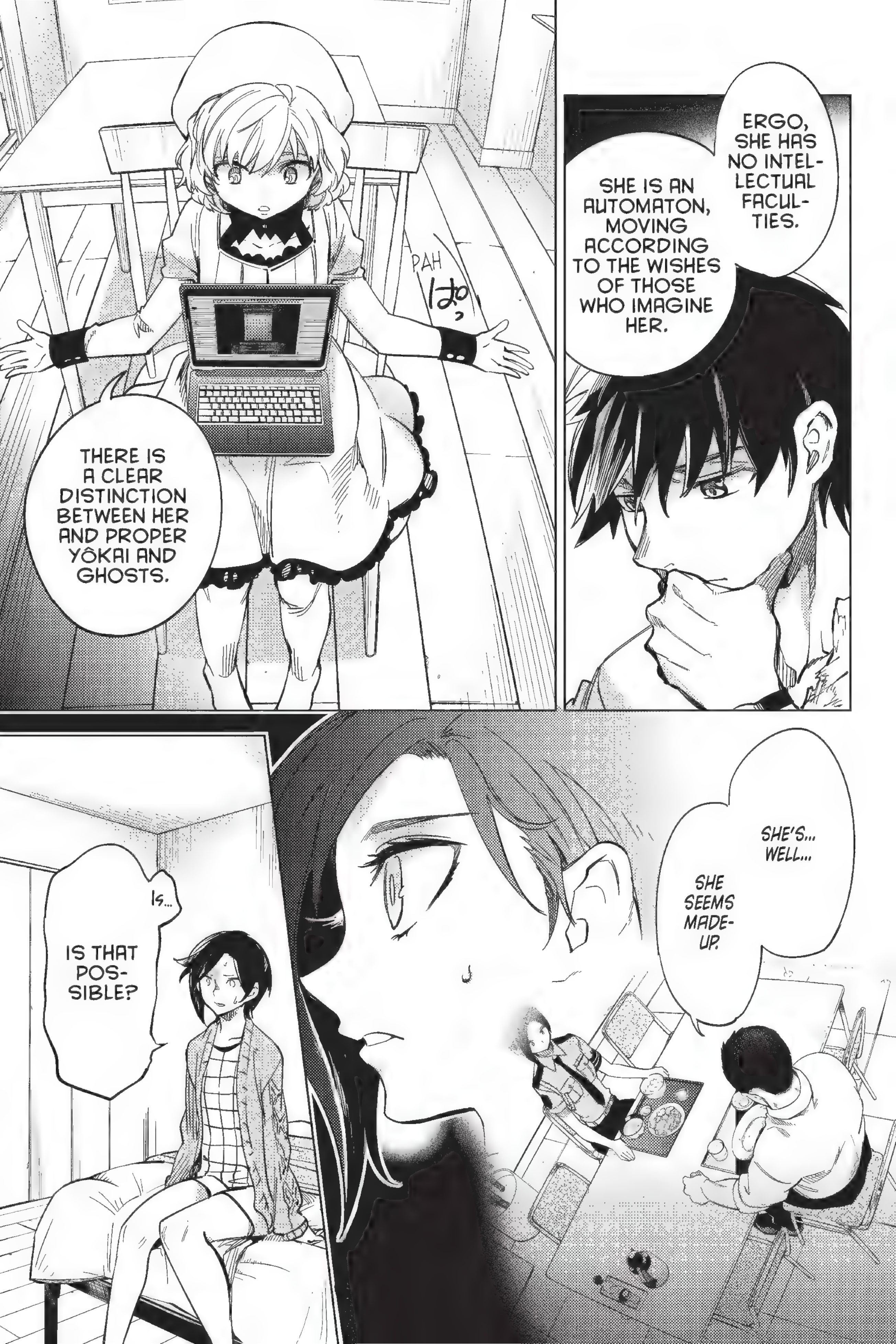

HERE WE HAVE A GHOST—PEOPLE ONLY KNOW WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE FROM RUMORS, WITHOUT A DECENT TESTIMONY TO BE HEARD.
DO YOU THINK *YOU* COULD PRODUCE AN EXACT LIKENESS BASED ON THAT INFORMATION?
...NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YES.
SO?
OF COURSE YOU COULDN'T. IT HAPPENED THE OTHER WAY AROUND.
THE ILLUSTRATION WASN'T DRAWN BASED ON STORIES OF THE GHOST.
THE GHOST TOOK THAT SPECIFIC FORM BECAUSE THAT ILLUSTRATION HAS CREATED THAT IMAGE OF STEEL LADY NANASE IN SO MANY PEOPLE'S MINDS.

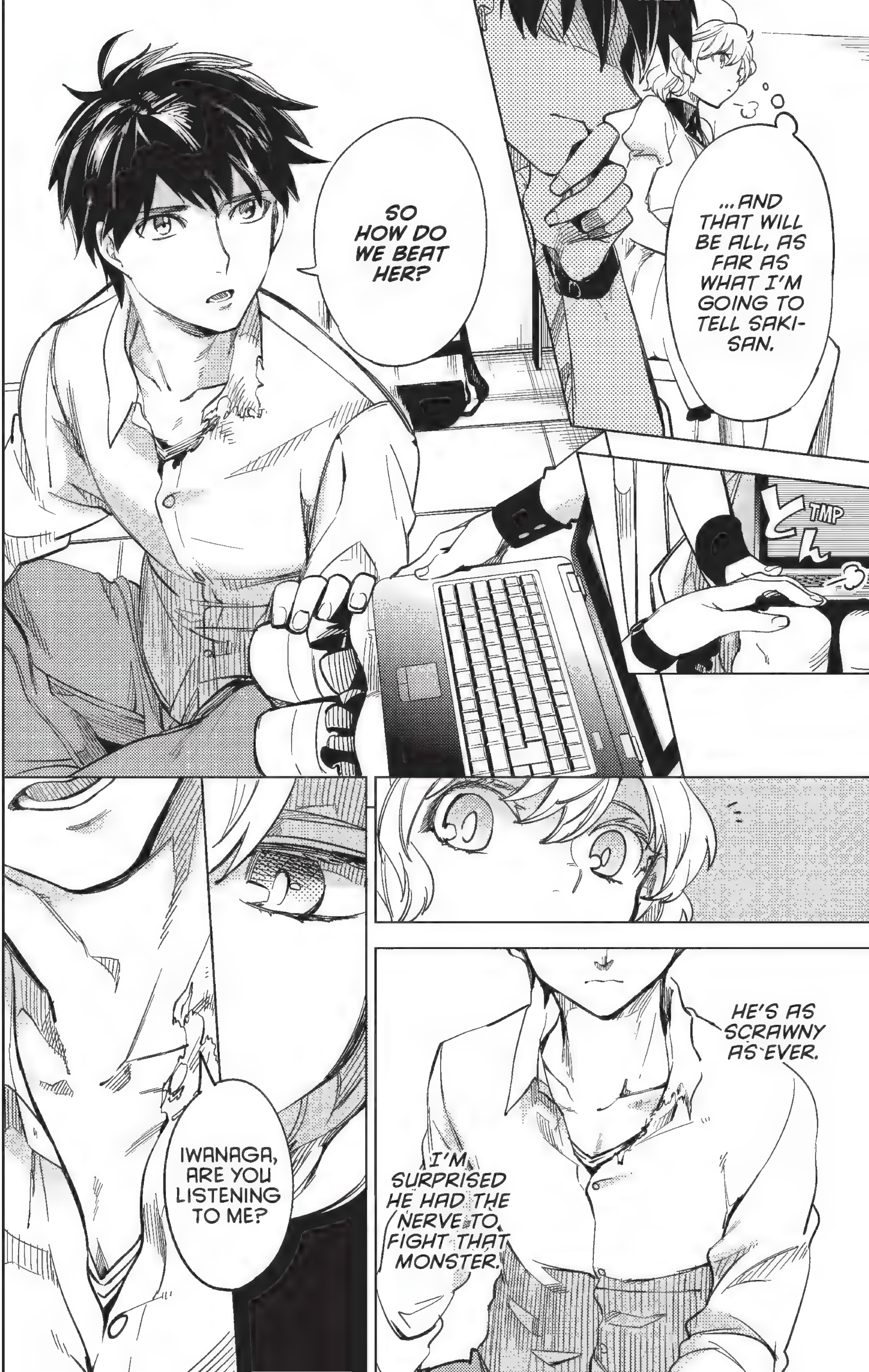

AN IDOL DIES AN UNTIMELY DEATH AND REAPPEARS AS A GHOST.
TMP
YOU HEAR IT SO OFTEN IT'S A CLICHÉ NOW.
AND YET A SINGLE WEBSITE HAS COLLECTED ALL THIS INFORMATION...
...MOBILIZED PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO POST ABOUT HER, AND SO HAS CREATED A MONSTER.
PLOP
すとん
B-DMP
...WHAT?

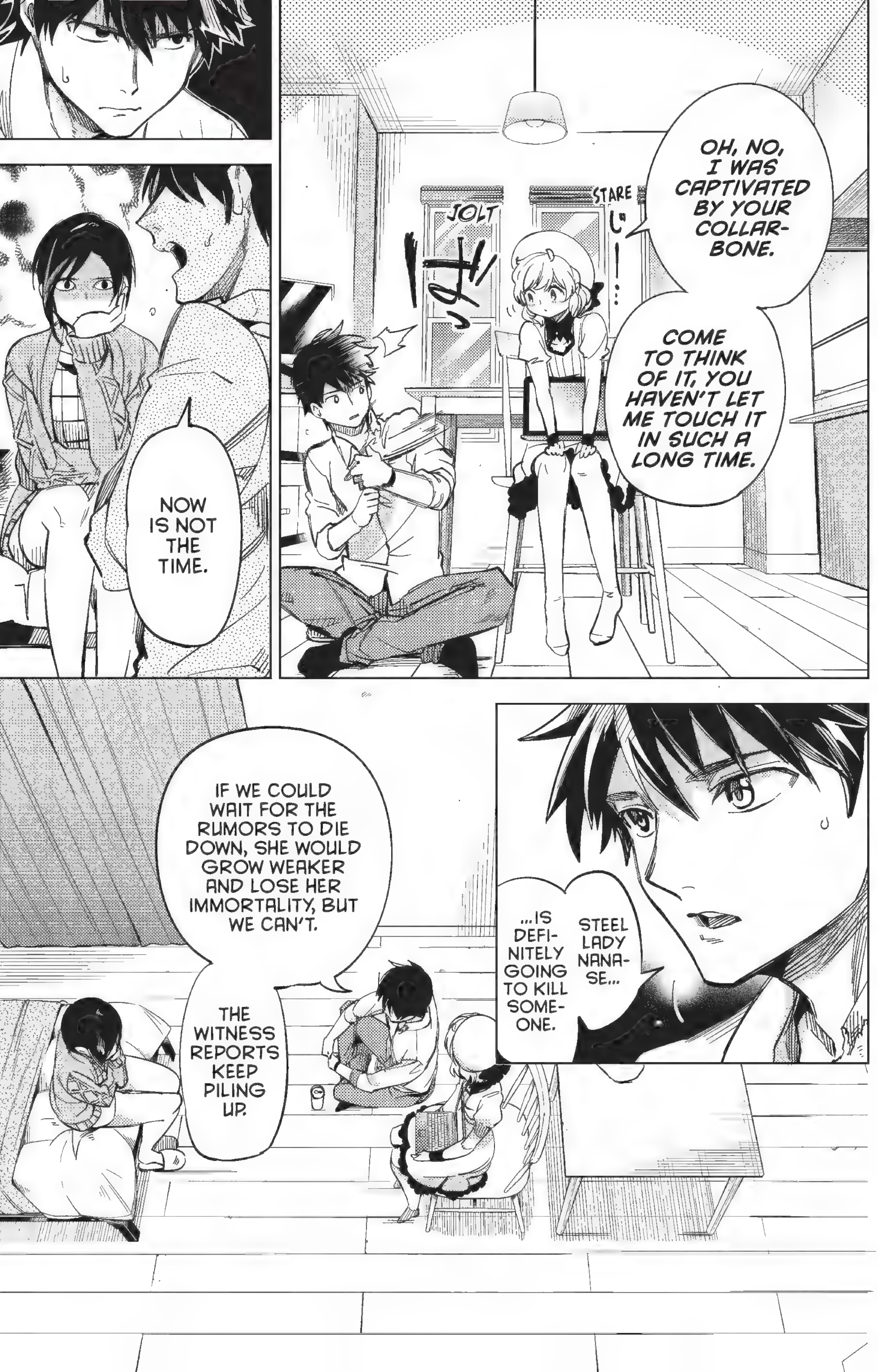

IT'S ALL BACKWARDS.
パチ
CLICK
THE WIKI DIDN'T START BECAUSE OF A GHOST.
THE GHOST WAS BORN BECAUSE OF THE WIKI.
TKKA
カタカタ
TKKA
WHIRL
くる

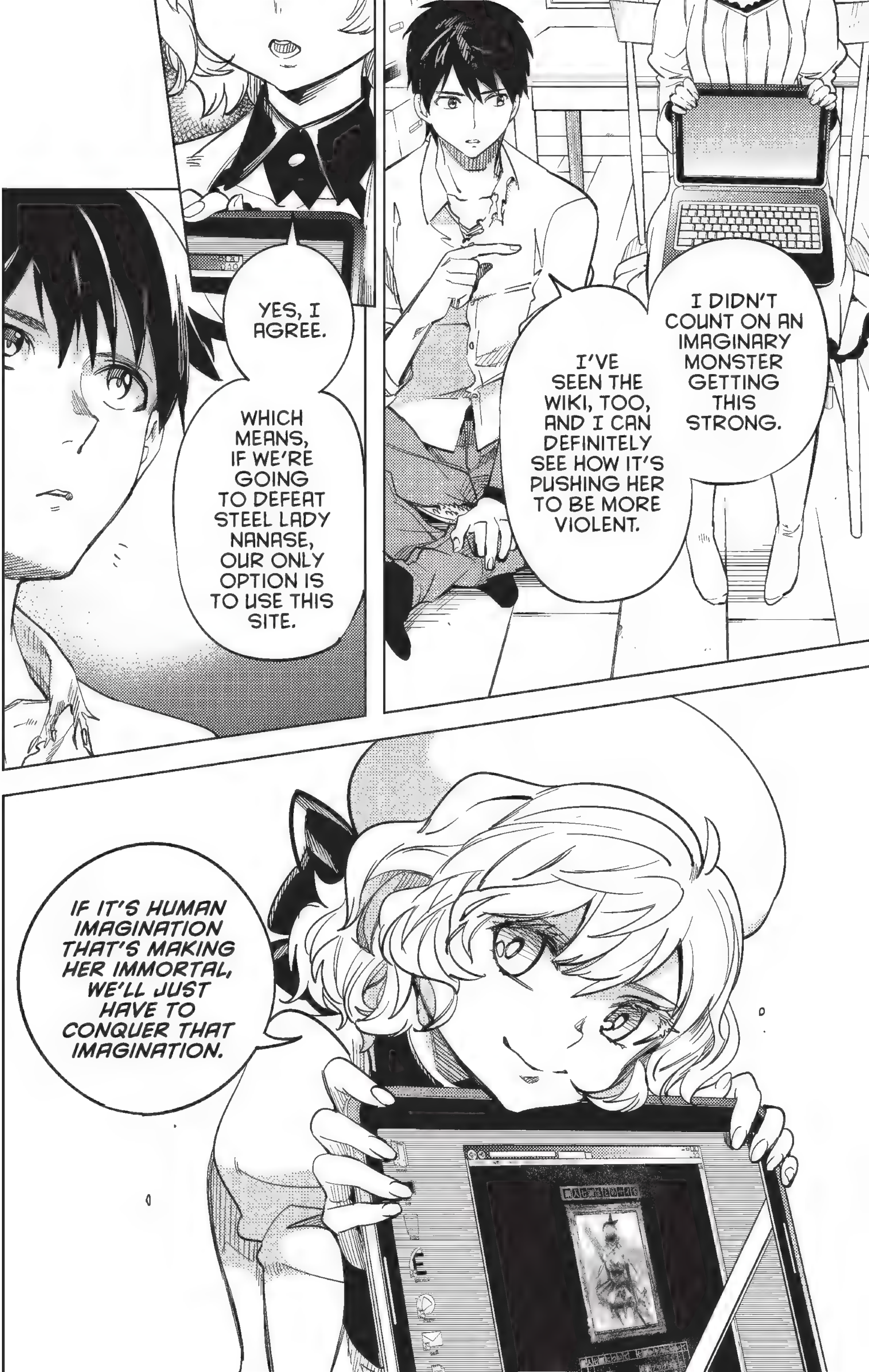

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT THIS VERY SITE...
http://koujinnanase.com
Steel Lady Nanase Wiki
Internet
Player
mail
00.txt
鋼人七瀬まとめサイト
STEEL LADY NANASE WIKI
鋼人七瀬について
ABOUT STEEL LADY NANASE
七瀬かりんについて
ABOUT KARIN NANASE
掲示板
FORUMS
RELEVANT BLOGS
考察ブログまとめ
OTHER
オカルト板まとめ
...IS THE TRUE STEEL LADY NANASE.

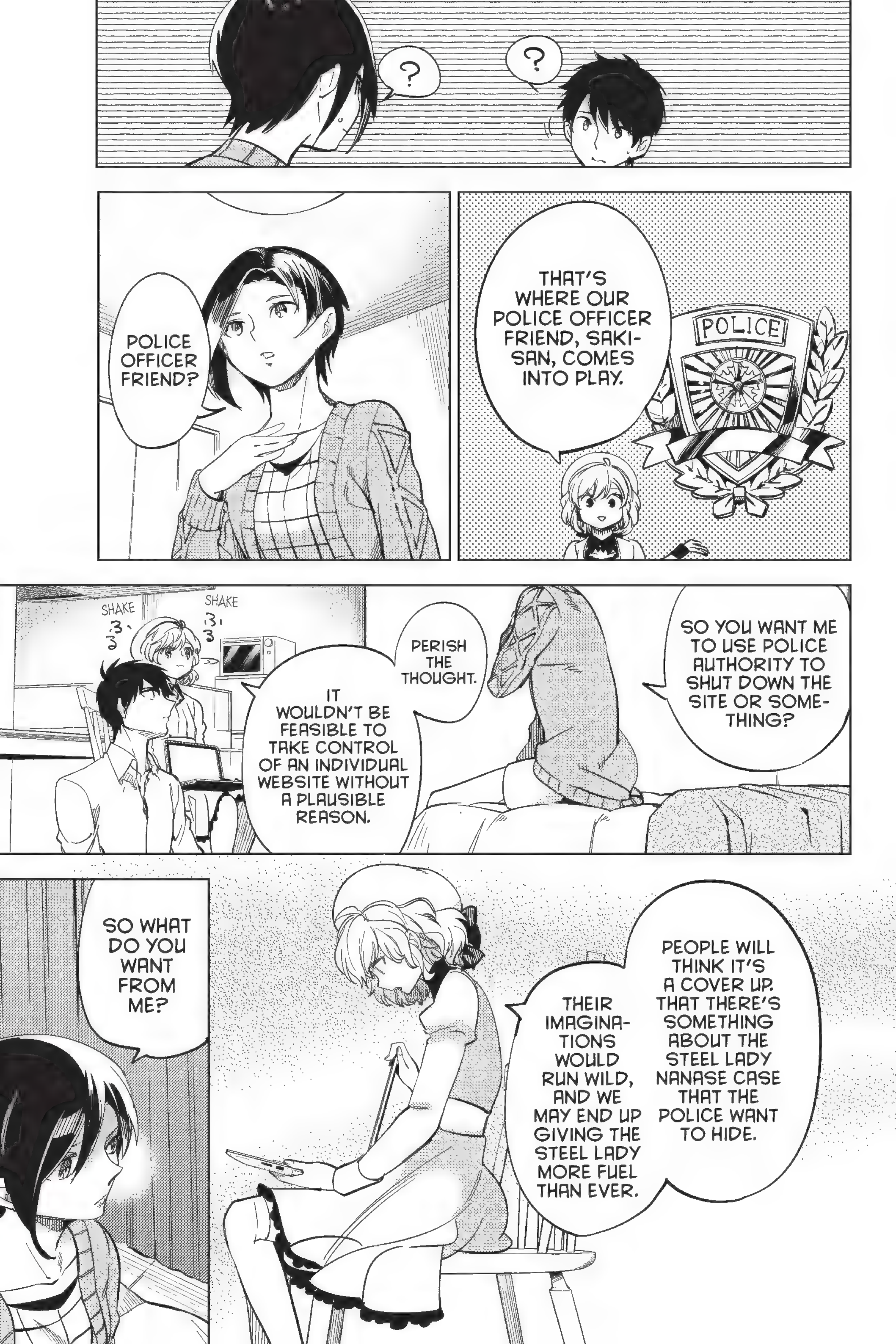

A MONSTER OF THE IMAGINATION IS FUELED BY THE POWER OF IMAGINATION.
AS LONG AS THAT IMAGINATION PERPETUATES FANTASIES ABOUT HER, AS LONG AS PEOPLE CONSTANTLY HOPE FOR HER TO BE REAL, STEEL LADY NANASE WILL BE IMMORTAL.
YOU CAN CUT OFF HER HEAD, GOUGE OUT HER HEART, KILL HER AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT, AND SHE'LL JUST COME BACK.
HER LIFE ISN'T IN HER BODY.
THERE ARE OUTSIDE DESIRES GIVING HER SHAPE AND SUBSTANCE.
Request ID
ciety Pushed Karin
to the brink.
Of course sh
as a ghost
ame: Withheld
l Lady N
will she appear again tonight?
s is just
mor, but
nder if that urban legend Ste
ould show up in Makurazaka ag
literally had no fa

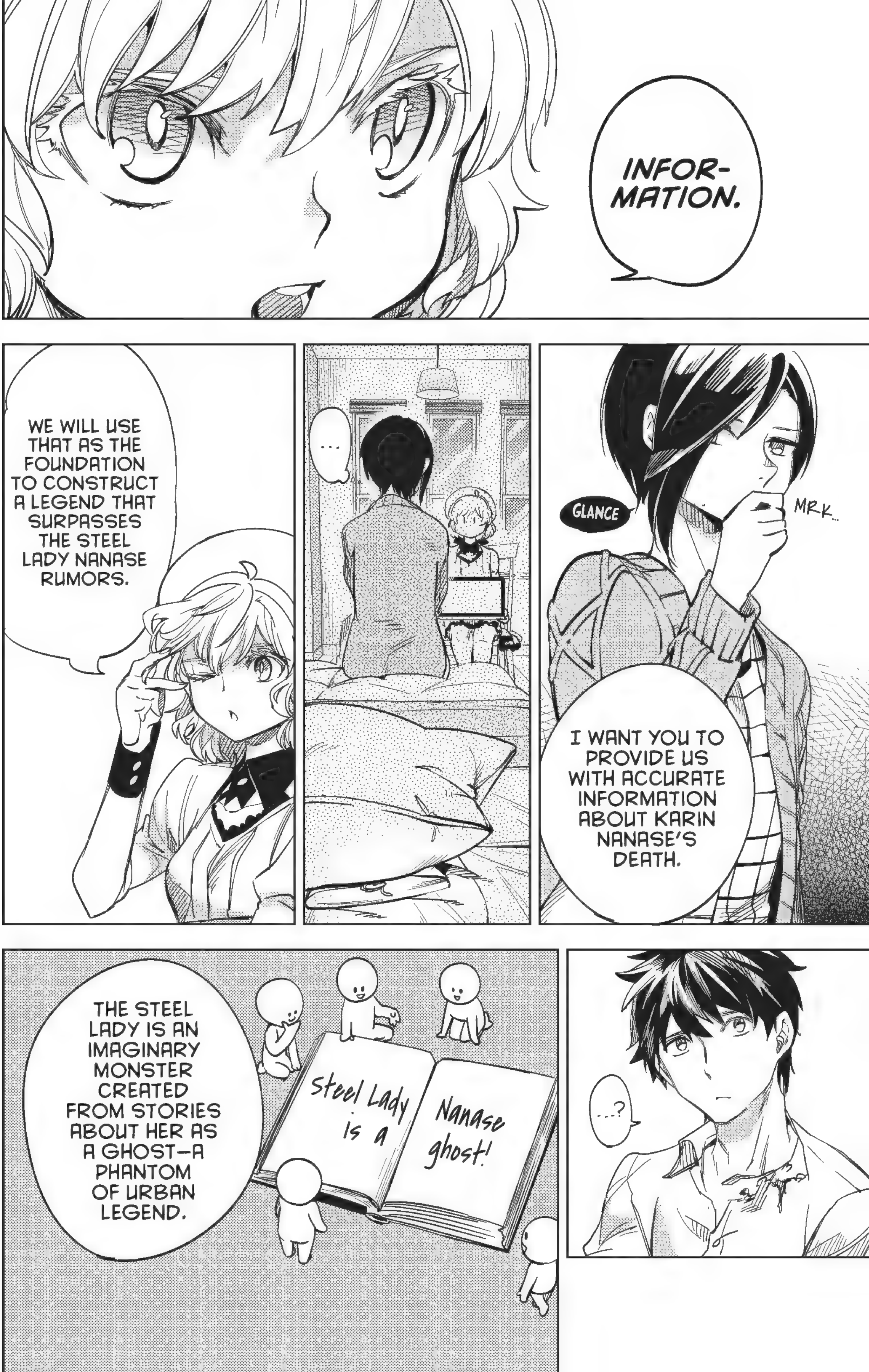

ERGO, SHE HAS NO INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES.
SHE IS AN AUTOMATON, MOVING ACCORDING TO THE WISHES OF THOSE WHO IMAGINE HER.
PAH
ぱっ
THERE IS A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN HER AND PROPER YÔKAI AND GHOSTS.
SHE'S... WELL...
SHE SEEMS MADE-UP.
IS...
IS THAT POSSIBLE?

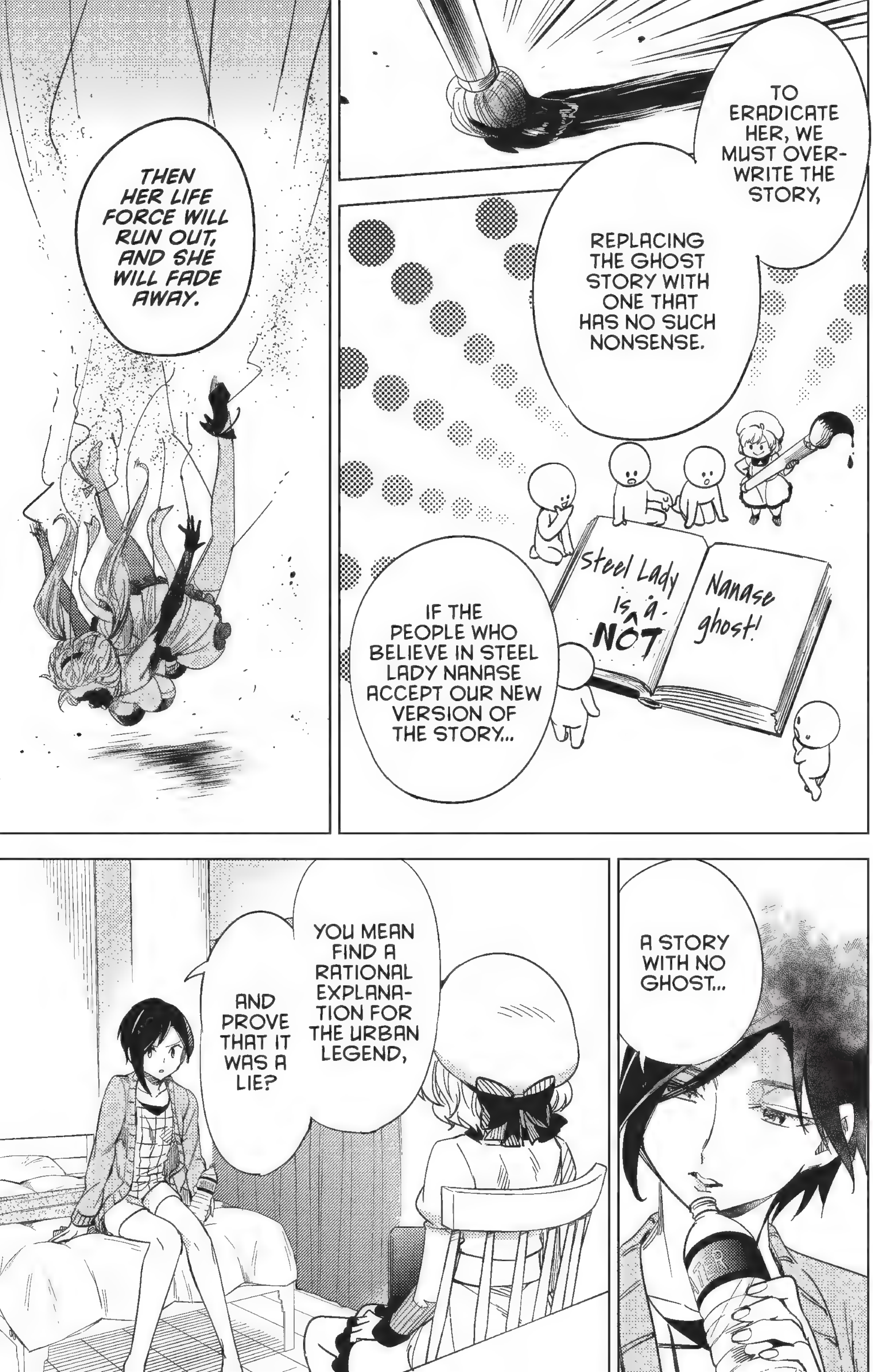

...AND THAT WILL BE ALL, AS FAR AS WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL SAKI-SAN.
SO HOW DO WE BEAT HER?
とん TMP
HE'S AS SCRAWNY AS EVER.
I'M SURPRISED HE HAD THE NERVE TO FIGHT THAT MONSTER.
IWANAGA, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

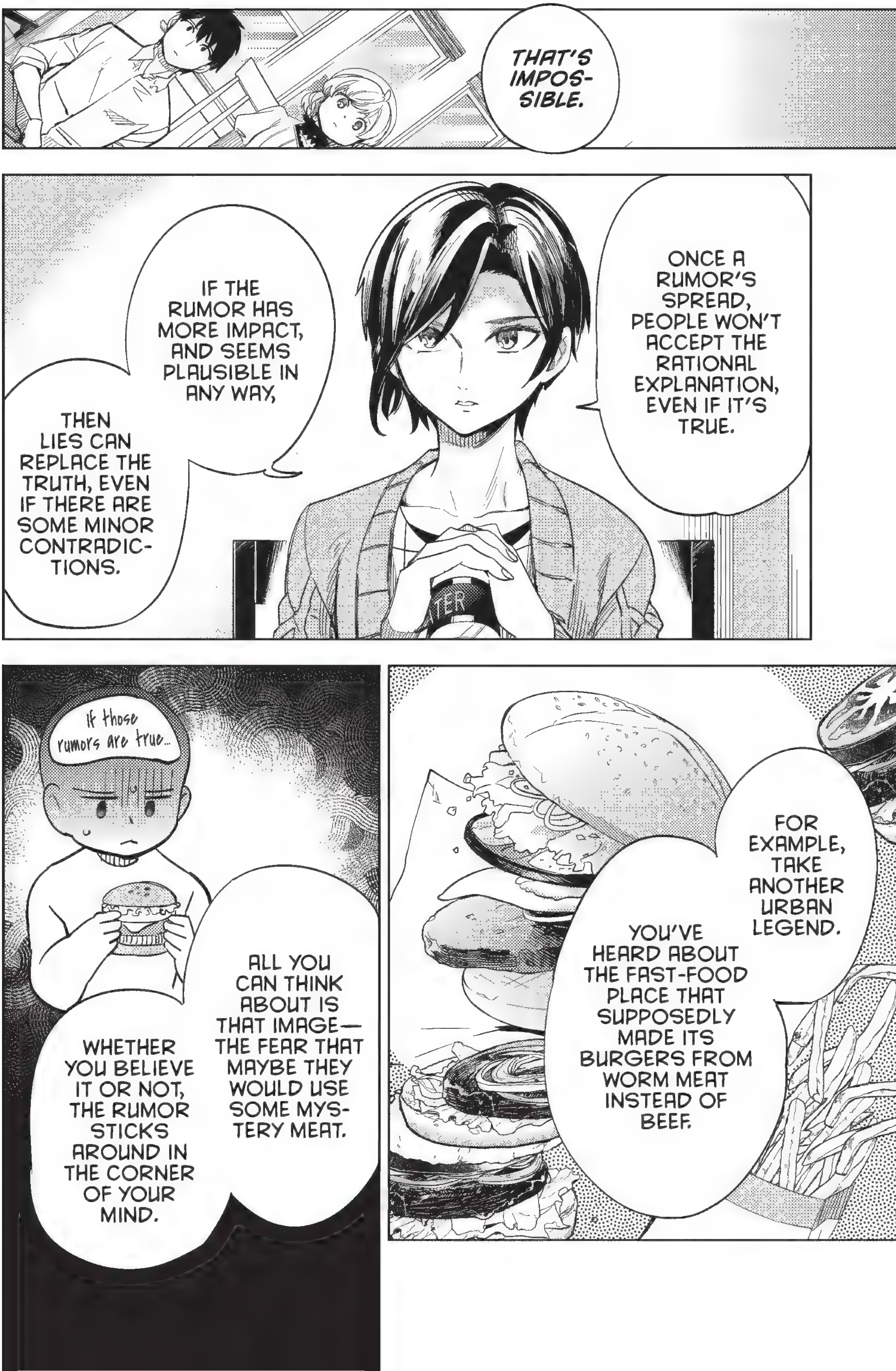

STARE
じ…
JOLT
ばっ
OH, NO, I WAS CAPTIVATED BY YOUR COLLARBONE.
COME TO THINK OF IT, YOU HAVEN'T LET ME TOUCH IT IN SUCH A LONG TIME.
NOW IS NOT THE TIME.
STEEL LADY NANASE…
…IS DEFINITELY GOING TO KILL SOMEONE.
IF WE COULD WAIT FOR THE RUMORS TO DIE DOWN, SHE WOULD GROW WEAKER AND LOSE HER IMMORTALITY, BUT WE CAN'T.
THE WITNESS REPORTS KEEP PILING UP.

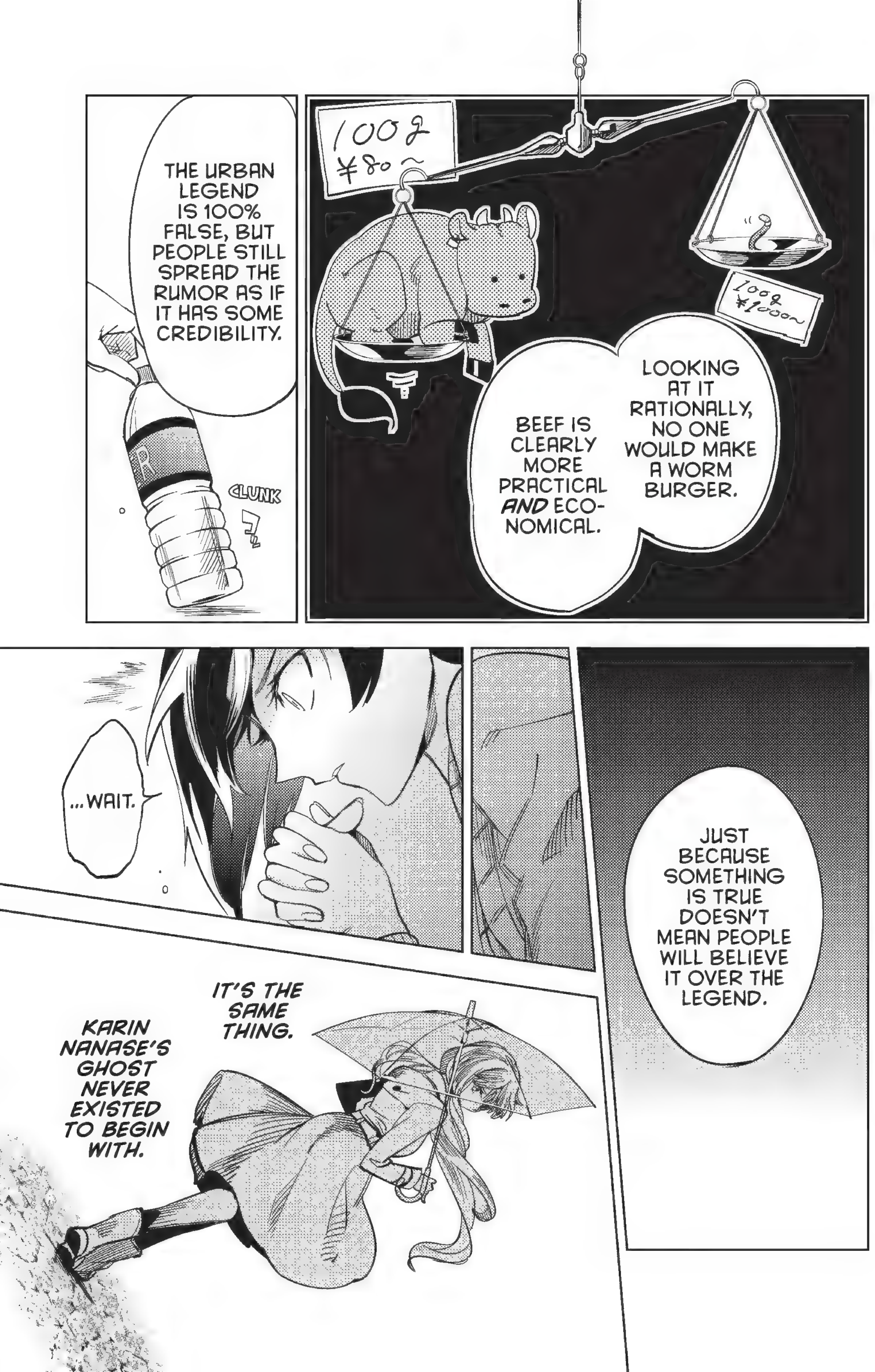

I DIDN'T COUNT ON AN IMAGINARY MONSTER GETTING THIS STRONG.
I'VE SEEN THE WIKI, TOO, AND I CAN DEFINITELY SEE HOW IT'S PUSHING HER TO BE MORE VIOLENT.
YES, I AGREE.
WHICH MEANS, IF WE'RE GOING TO DEFEAT STEEL LADY NANASE, OUR ONLY OPTION IS TO USE THIS SITE.
IF IT'S HUMAN IMAGINATION THAT'S MAKING HER IMMORTAL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO CONQUER THAT IMAGINATION.

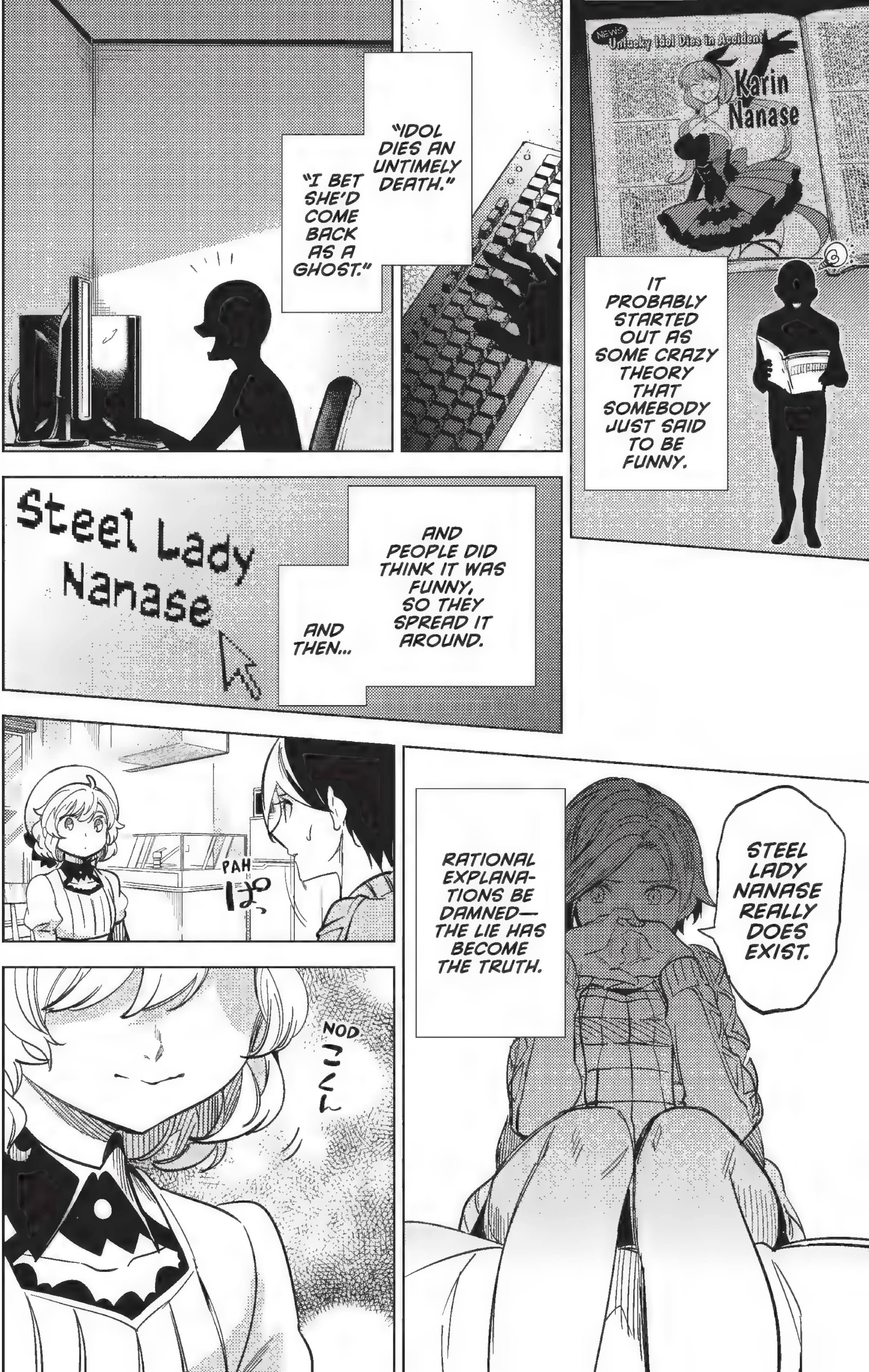

?
?
THAT'S WHERE OUR POLICE OFFICER FRIEND, SAKI-SAN, COMES INTO PLAY.
POLICE
POLICE OFFICER FRIEND?
SO YOU WANT ME TO USE POLICE AUTHORITY TO SHUT DOWN THE SITE OR SOMETHING?
PERISH THE THOUGHT.
IT WOULDN'T BE FEASIBLE TO TAKE CONTROL OF AN INDIVIDUAL WEBSITE WITHOUT A PLAUSIBLE REASON.
SHAKE
SHAKE
PEOPLE WILL THINK IT'S A COVER UP. THAT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE STEEL LADY NANASE CASE THAT THE POLICE WANT TO HIDE.
THEIR IMAGINATIONS WOULD RUN WILD, AND WE MAY END UP GIVING THE STEEL LADY MORE FUEL THAN EVER.
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

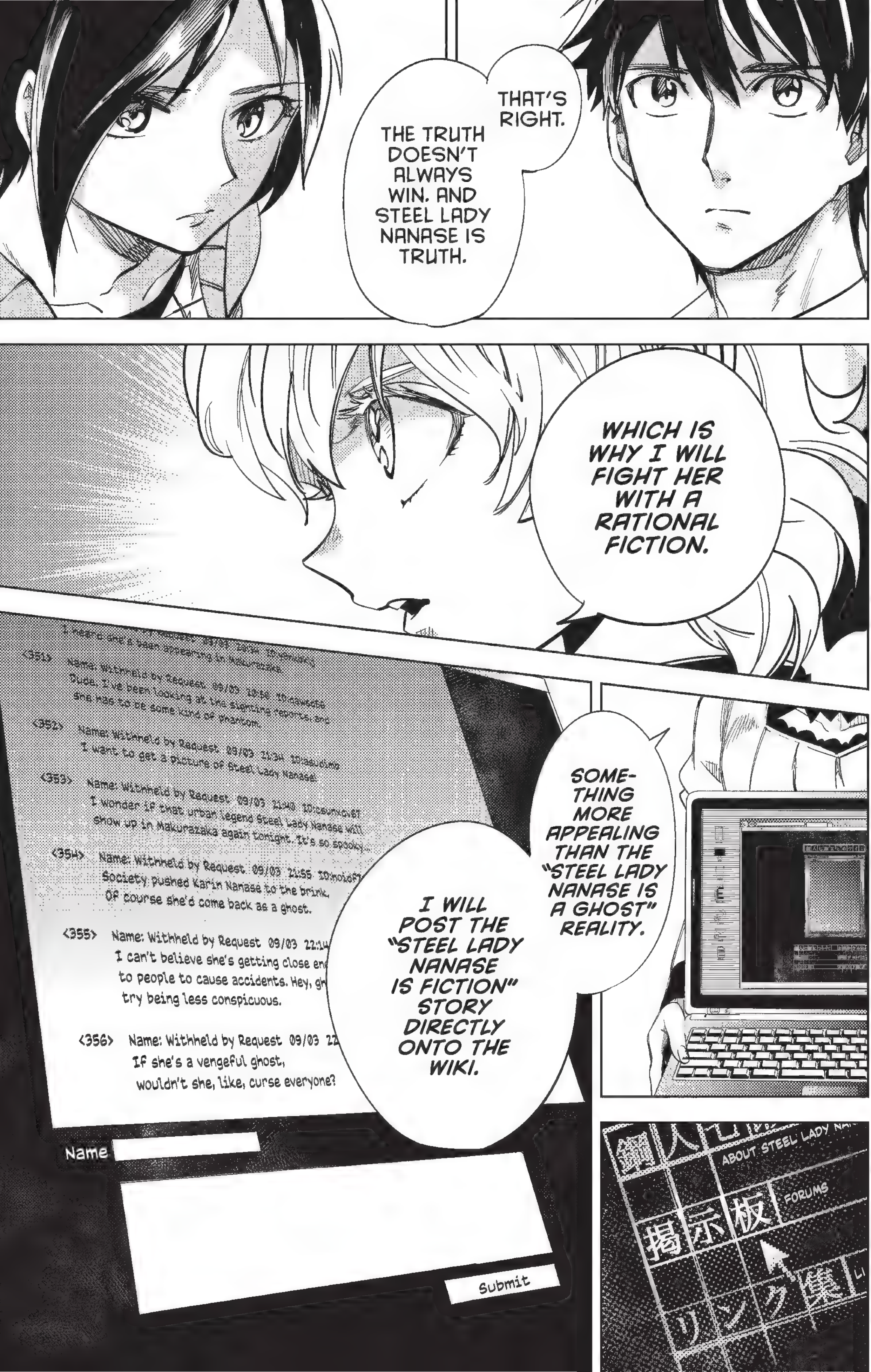

INFOR-MATION.
GLANCE
MRK...
I WANT YOU TO PROVIDE US WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT KARIN NANASE'S DEATH.
...
WE WILL USE THAT AS THE FOUNDATION TO CONSTRUCT A LEGEND THAT SURPASSES THE STEEL LADY NANASE RUMORS.
...?
THE STEEL LADY IS AN IMAGINARY MONSTER CREATED FROM STORIES ABOUT HER AS A GHOST—A PHANTOM OF URBAN LEGEND.
Steel Lady is a
Nanase ghost!


TO ERADICATE HER, WE MUST OVERWRITE THE STORY,
REPLACING THE GHOST STORY WITH ONE THAT HAS NO SUCH NONSENSE.
Steel Lady Nanase is NOT a ghost!
IF THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN STEEL LADY NANASE ACCEPT OUR NEW VERSION OF THE STORY...
THEN HER LIFE FORCE WILL RUN OUT, AND SHE WILL FADE AWAY.
A STORY WITH NO GHOST...
YOU MEAN FIND A RATIONAL EXPLANATION FOR THE URBAN LEGEND,
AND PROVE THAT IT WAS A LIE?


THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
ONCE A RUMOR'S SPREAD, PEOPLE WON'T ACCEPT THE RATIONAL EXPLANATION, EVEN IF IT'S TRUE.
IF THE RUMOR HAS MORE IMPACT, AND SEEMS PLAUSIBLE IN ANY WAY,
THEN LIES CAN REPLACE THE TRUTH, EVEN IF THERE ARE SOME MINOR CONTRADICTIONS.
FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE ANOTHER URBAN LEGEND.
YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THE FAST-FOOD PLACE THAT SUPPOSEDLY MADE ITS BURGERS FROM WORM MEAT INSTEAD OF BEEF.
If those rumors are true...
ALL YOU CAN THINK ABOUT IS THAT IMAGE—THE FEAR THAT MAYBE THEY WOULD USE SOME MYSTERY MEAT.
WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE RUMOR STICKS AROUND IN THE CORNER OF YOUR MIND.


100g ¥1000~
100g ¥80~
LOOKING AT IT RATIONALLY, NO ONE WOULD MAKE A WORM BURGER.
BEEF IS CLEARLY MORE PRACTICAL *AND* ECONOMICAL.
THE URBAN LEGEND IS 100% FALSE, BUT PEOPLE STILL SPREAD THE RUMOR AS IF IT HAS SOME CREDIBILITY.
CLUNK
JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING IS TRUE DOESN'T MEAN PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE IT OVER THE LEGEND.
...WAIT.
IT'S THE SAME THING.
KARIN NANASE'S GHOST NEVER EXISTED TO BEGIN WITH.


NEWS
Unlucky Idol Dies in Accident
Karin Nanase
IT PROBABLY STARTED OUT AS SOME CRAZY THEORY THAT SOMEBODY JUST SAID TO BE FUNNY.
"IDOL DIES AN UNTIMELY DEATH."
"I BET SHE'D COME BACK AS A GHOST."
Steel Lady Nanase
AND PEOPLE DID THINK IT WAS FUNNY, SO THEY SPREAD IT AROUND.
AND THEN...
STEEL LADY NANASE REALLY DOES EXIST.
RATIONAL EXPLANATIONS BE DAMNED—THE LIE HAS BECOME THE TRUTH.
PAH
ぱっ
NOD
こくん


THAT'S RIGHT.
THE TRUTH DOESN'T ALWAYS WIN. AND STEEL LADY NANASE IS TRUTH.
WHICH IS WHY I WILL FIGHT HER WITH A RATIONAL FICTION.
SOMETHING MORE APPEALING THAN THE "STEEL LADY NANASE IS A GHOST" REALITY.
I WILL POST THE "STEEL LADY NANASE IS FICTION" STORY DIRECTLY ONTO THE WIKI.
Name
Submit
鋼人七
ABOUT STEEL LADY NA
掲示板
FORUMS
リンク集

y Request 09/03 20:34 ID:yonokkq
I heard she's been appearing in Makurazaka.

<351> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 20:50 ID:cawsobe
Dude, I've been looking at the sighting reports, and she has to be some kind of phantom.

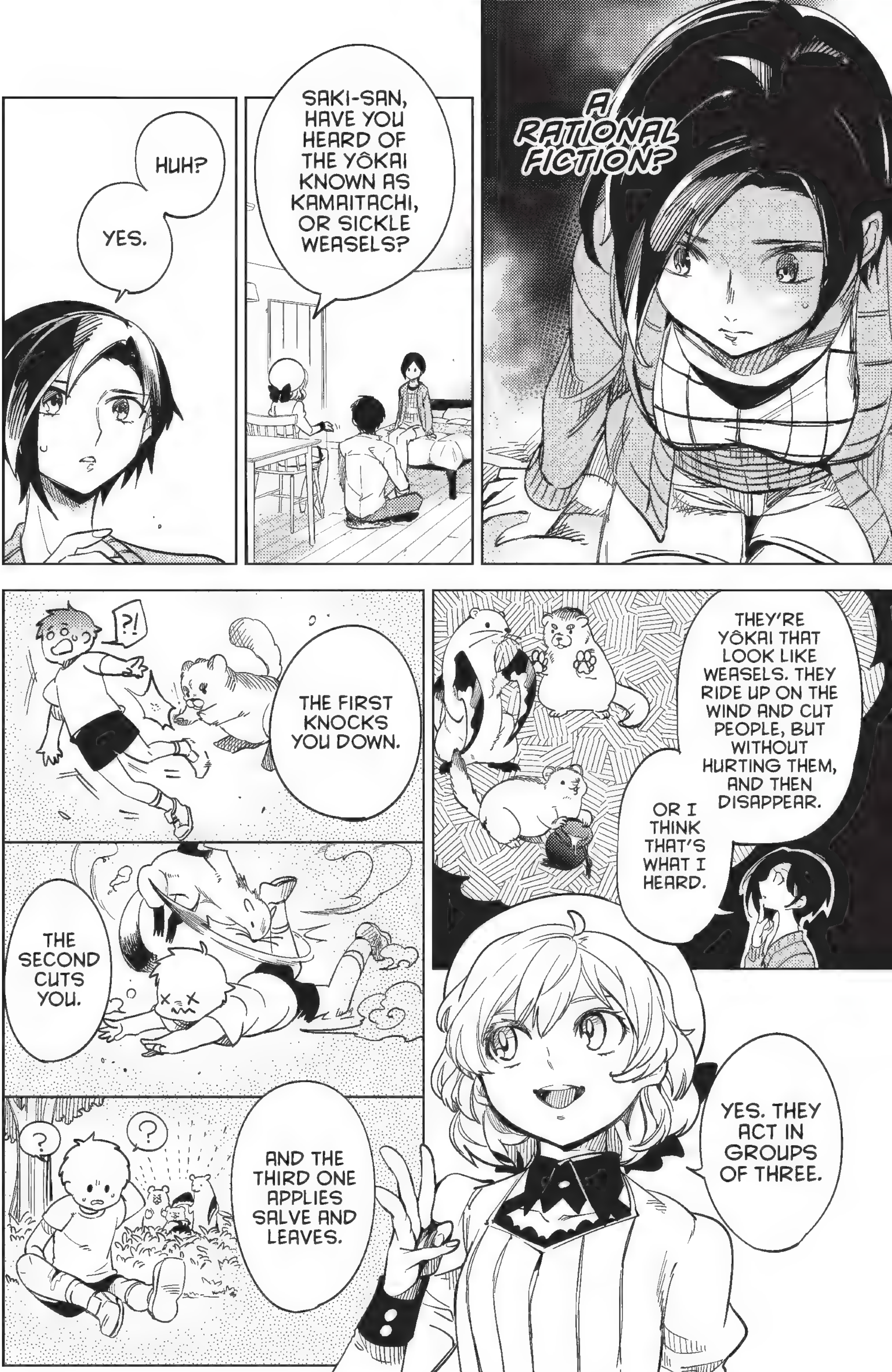
<352> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 21:34 ID:asudimo
I want to get a picture of Steel Lady Nanase.

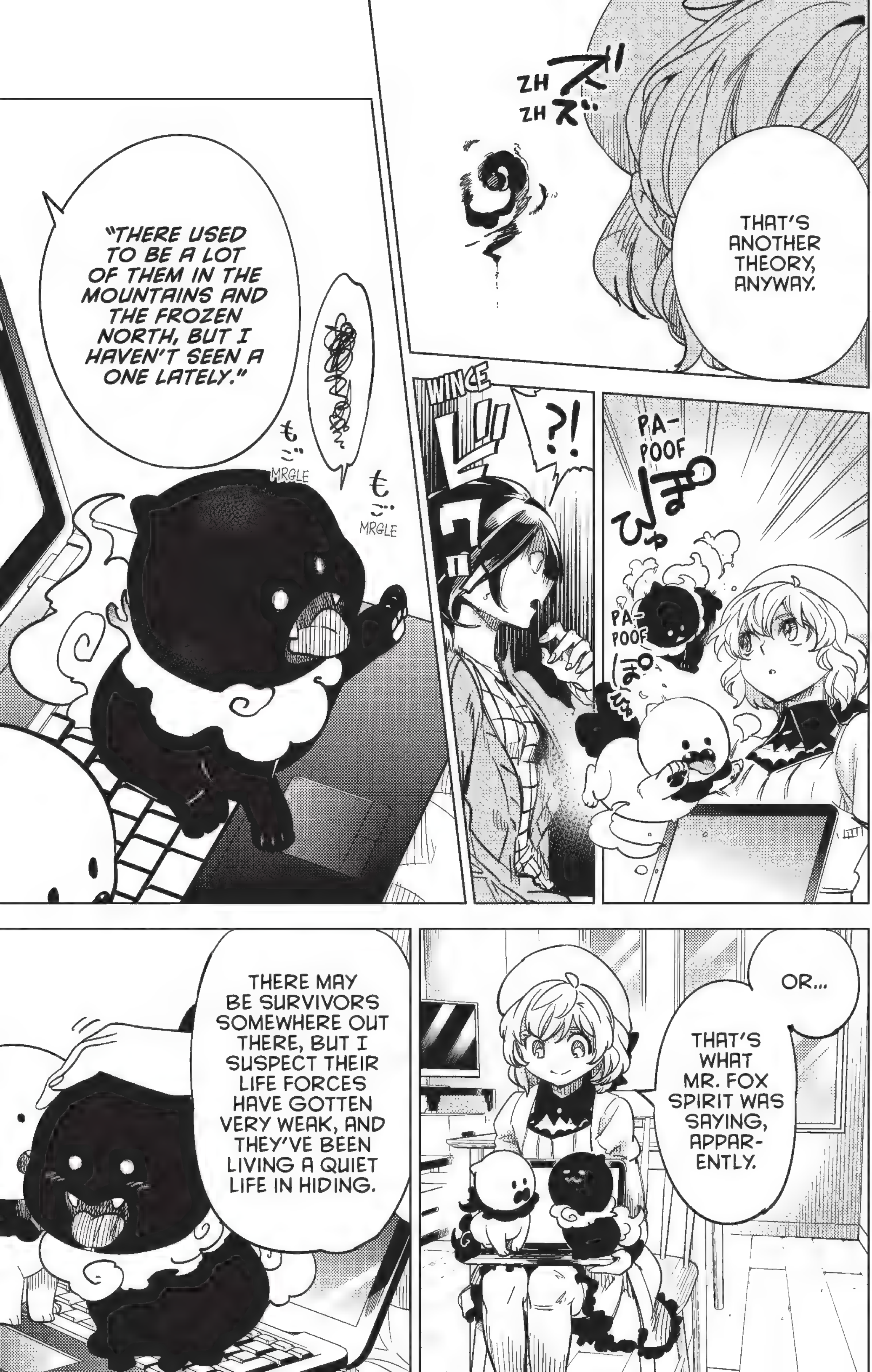
<353> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 21:40 ID:csunxcv67
I wonder if that urban legend Steel Lady Nanase will show up in Makurazaka again tonight. It's so spooky...

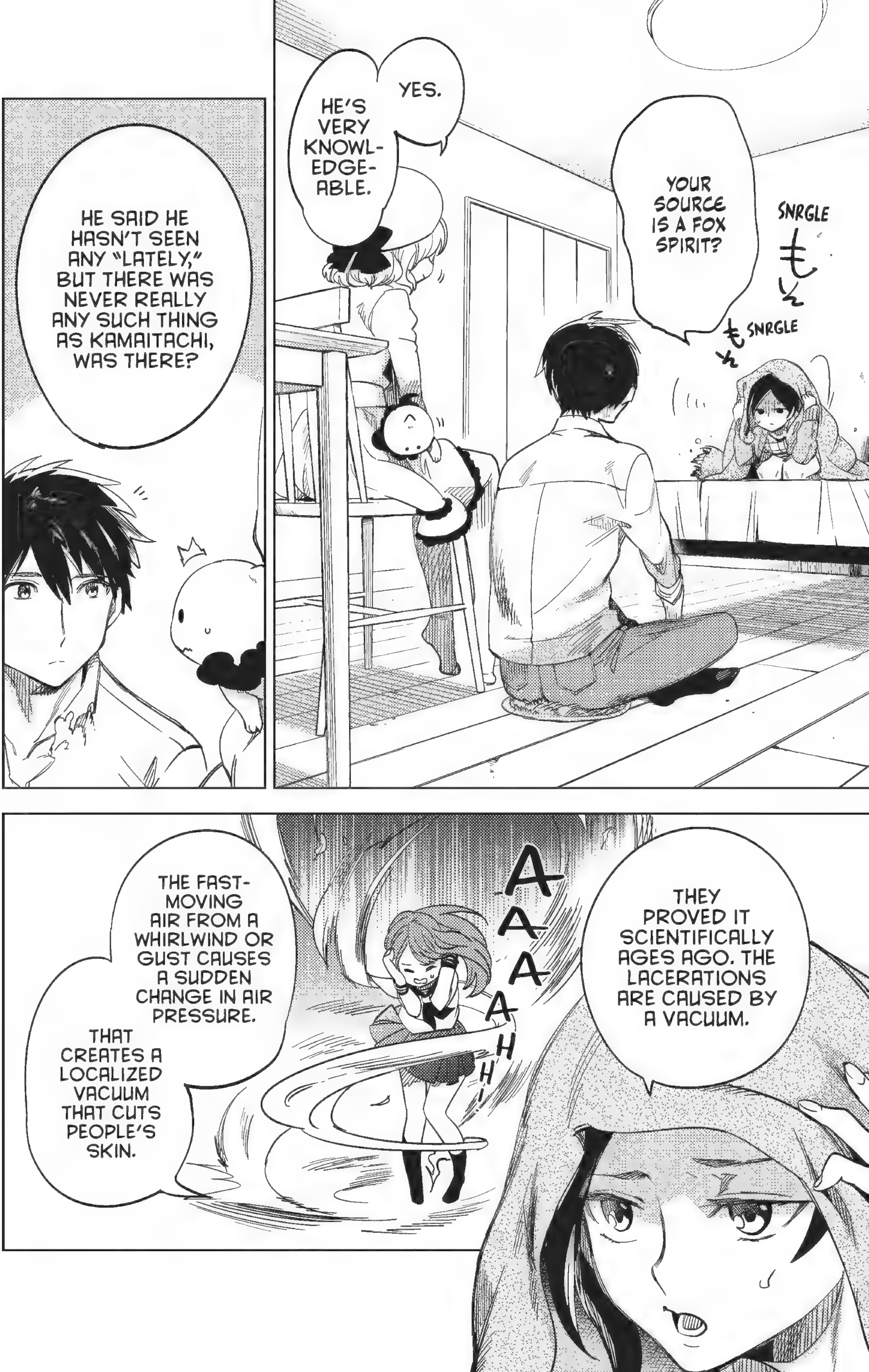
<354> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 21:55 ID:hoiof
Society pushed Karin Nanase to the brink. Of course she'd come back as a ghost.

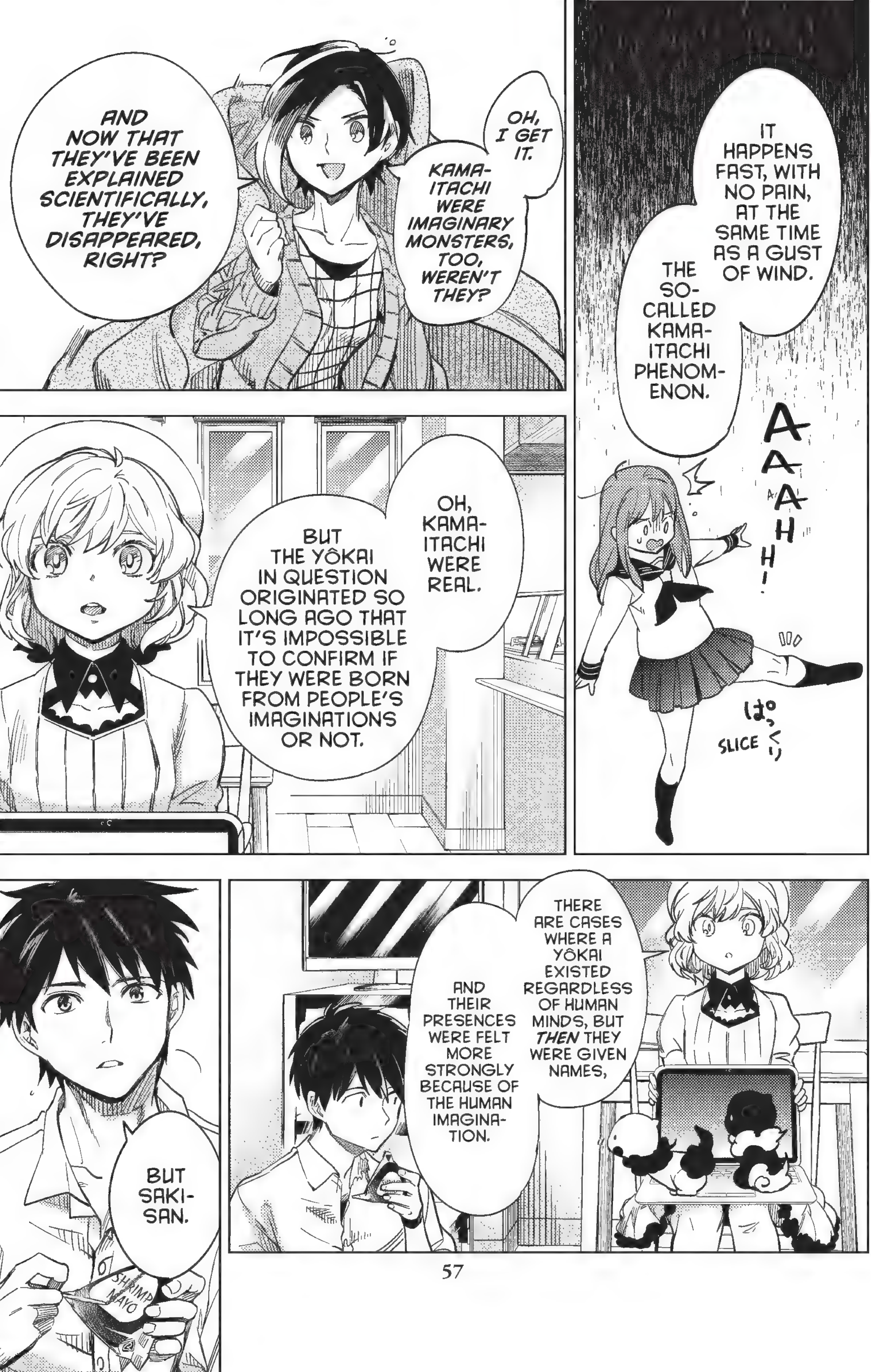
<355> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 22:14
I can't believe she's getting close en
to people to cause accidents. Hey, gh
try being less conspicuous.

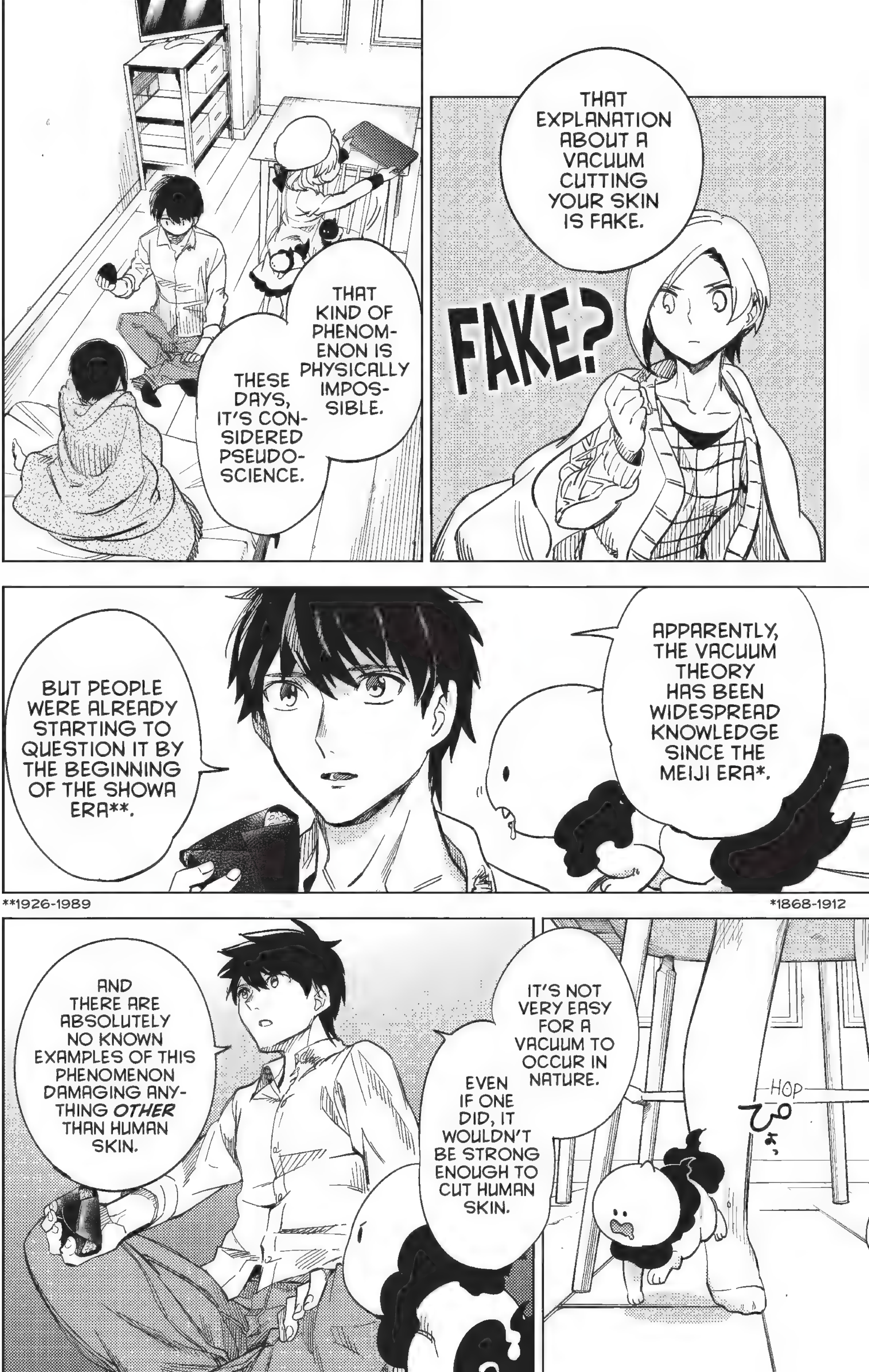
<356> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 22
If she's a vengeful ghost,
wouldn't she, like, curse everyone?


A RATIONAL FICTION?
SAKI-SAN, HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE YÔKAI KNOWN AS KAMAITACHI, OR SICKLE WEASELS?
HUH?
YES.
THEY'RE YÔKAI THAT LOOK LIKE WEASELS. THEY RIDE UP ON THE WIND AND CUT PEOPLE, BUT WITHOUT HURTING THEM, AND THEN DISAPPEAR.
OR I THINK THAT'S WHAT I HEARD.
YES. THEY ACT IN GROUPS OF THREE.
THE FIRST KNOCKS YOU DOWN.
?!
THE SECOND CUTS YOU.
AND THE THIRD ONE APPLIES SALVE AND LEAVES.
?
?


ZH ズ
ZH ズ
THAT'S ANOTHER THEORY, ANYWAY.
PA-POOF ぽひゅ
PA-POOF ぽひゅ
WINCE
?!
"THERE USED TO BE A LOT OF THEM IN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE FROZEN NORTH, BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN A ONE LATELY."
もご MRGLE
もご MRGLE
OR...
THAT'S WHAT MR. FOX SPIRIT WAS SAYING, APPARENTLY.
THERE MAY BE SURVIVORS SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, BUT I SUSPECT THEIR LIFE FORCES HAVE GOTTEN VERY WEAK, AND THEY'VE BEEN LIVING A QUIET LIFE IN HIDING.

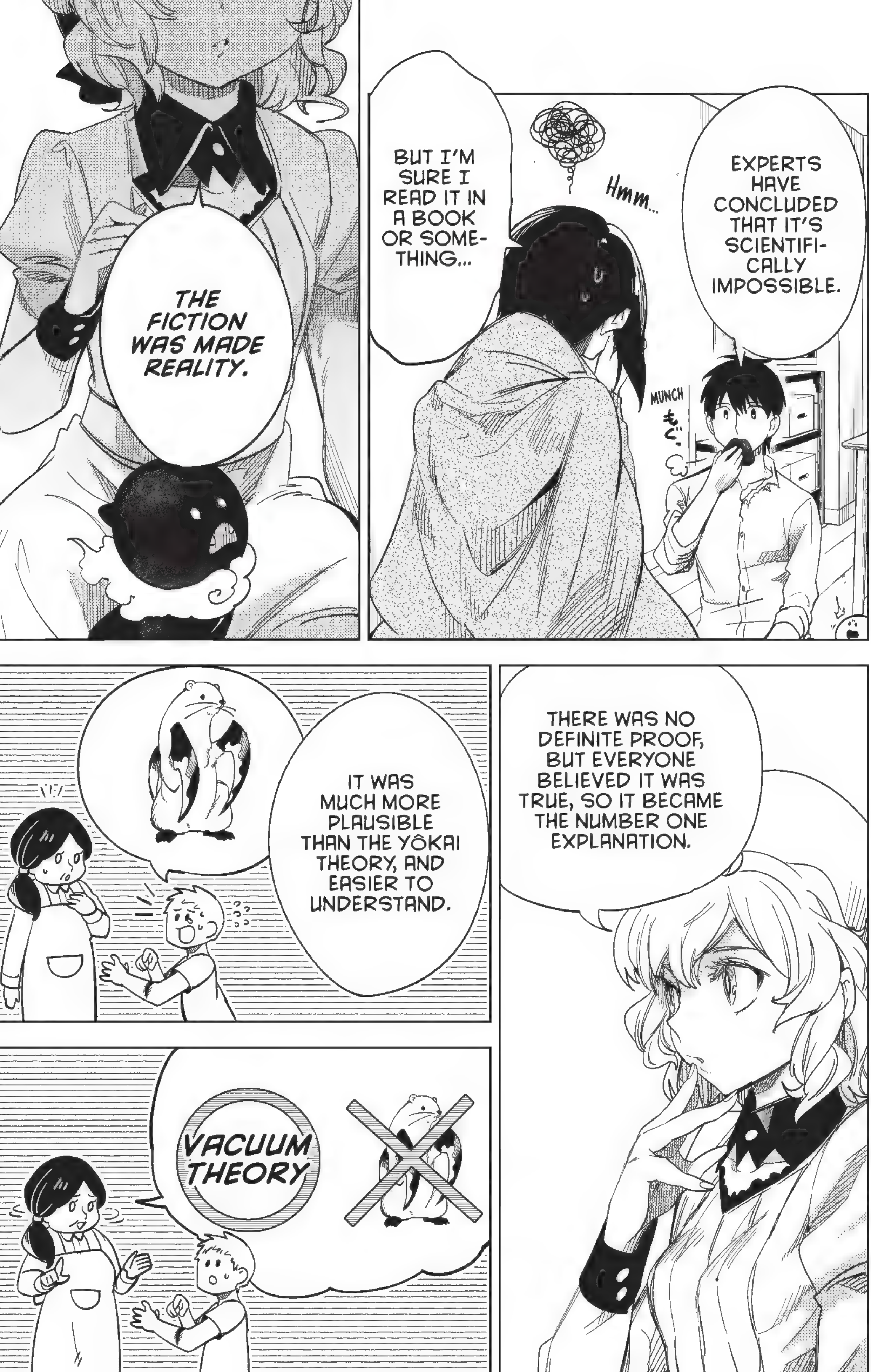

YOUR SOURCE IS A FOX SPIRIT?
SNRGLE
SNRGLE
YES.
HE'S VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE.
HE SAID HE HASN'T SEEN ANY "LATELY," BUT THERE WAS NEVER REALLY ANY SUCH THING AS KAMAITACHI, WAS THERE?
THEY PROVED IT SCIENTIFICALLY AGES AGO. THE LACERATIONS ARE CAUSED BY A VACUUM.
AAAAHH!
THE FAST-MOVING AIR FROM A WHIRLWIND OR GUST CAUSES A SUDDEN CHANGE IN AIR PRESSURE.
THAT CREATES A LOCALIZED VACUUM THAT CUTS PEOPLE'S SKIN.

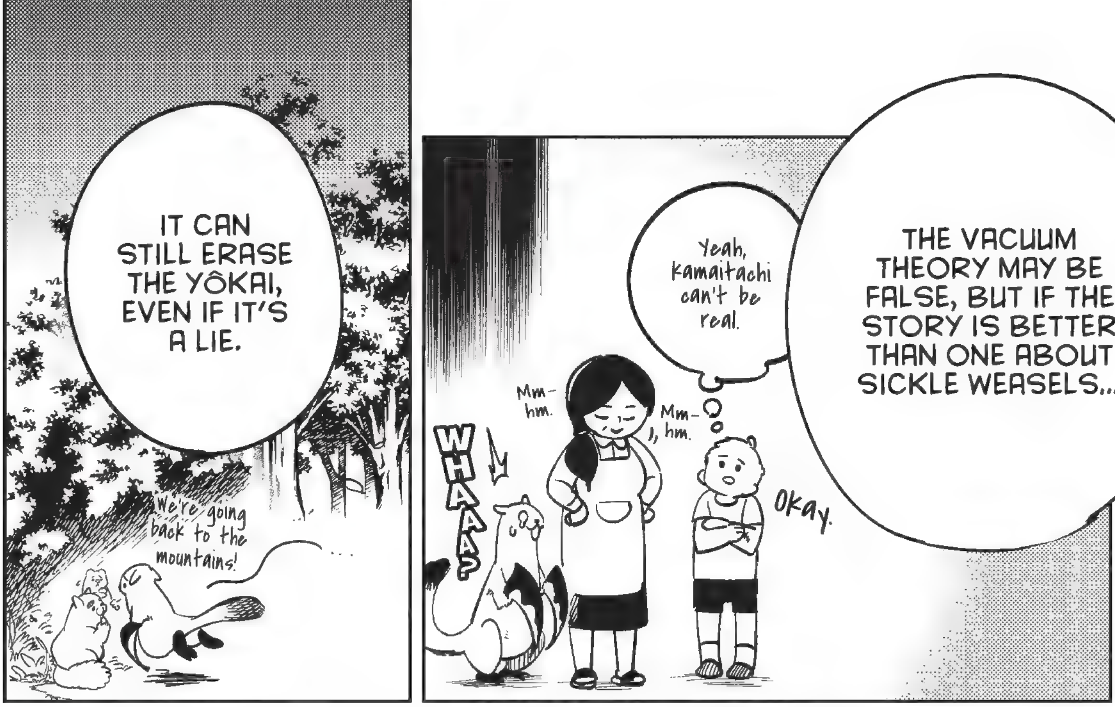

IT HAPPENS FAST, WITH NO PAIN, AT THE SAME TIME AS A GUST OF WIND.
THE SO-CALLED KAMA-ITACHI PHENOMENON.
AAAAHH!
ぱっくり
SLICE
OH, I GET IT.
KAMA-ITACHI WERE IMAGINARY MONSTERS, TOO, WEREN'T THEY?
AND NOW THAT THEY'VE BEEN EXPLAINED SCIENTIFICALLY, THEY'VE DISAPPEARED, RIGHT?
OH, KAMA-ITACHI WERE REAL.
BUT THE YÔKAI IN QUESTION ORIGINATED SO LONG AGO THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO CONFIRM IF THEY WERE BORN FROM PEOPLE'S IMAGINATIONS OR NOT.
THERE ARE CASES WHERE A YÔKAI EXISTED REGARDLESS OF HUMAN MINDS, BUT *THEN* THEY WERE GIVEN NAMES,
AND THEIR PRESENCES WERE FELT MORE STRONGLY BECAUSE OF THE HUMAN IMAGINATION.
BUT SAKI-SAN.
SHRIMP MAYO

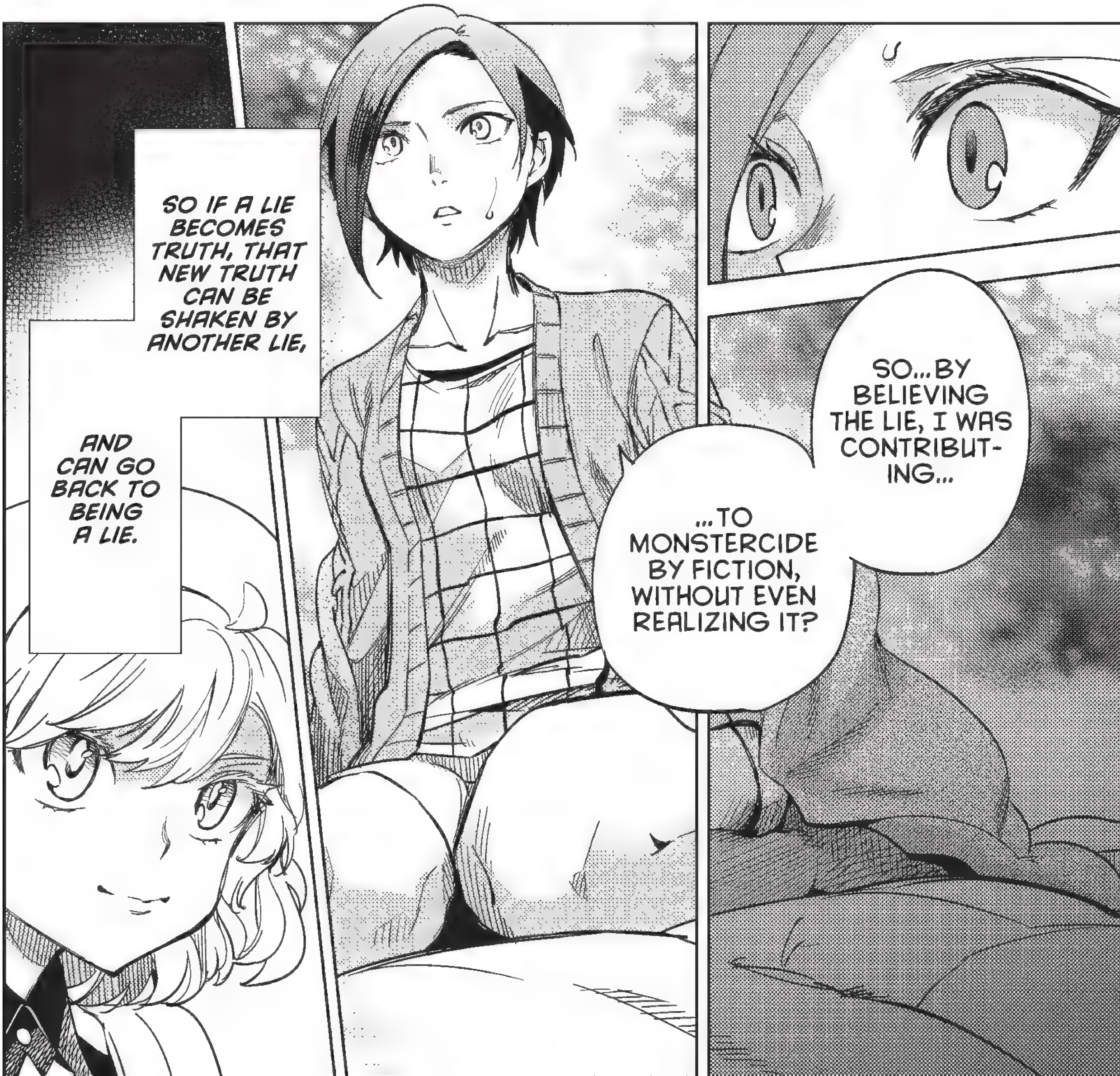

THAT EXPLANATION ABOUT A VACUUM CUTTING YOUR SKIN IS FAKE.
FAKE?
THAT KIND OF PHENOMENON IS PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.
THESE DAYS, IT'S CONSIDERED PSEUDOSCIENCE.
APPARENTLY, THE VACUUM THEORY HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD KNOWLEDGE SINCE THE MEIJI ERA*.
BUT PEOPLE WERE ALREADY STARTING TO QUESTION IT BY THE BEGINNING OF THE SHOWA ERA**.
HOP
ぴょっ
IT'S NOT VERY EASY FOR A VACUUM TO OCCUR IN NATURE.
EVEN IF ONE DID, IT WOULDN'T BE STRONG ENOUGH TO CUT HUMAN SKIN.
AND THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO KNOWN EXAMPLES OF THIS PHENOMENON DAMAGING ANYTHING *OTHER* THAN HUMAN SKIN.

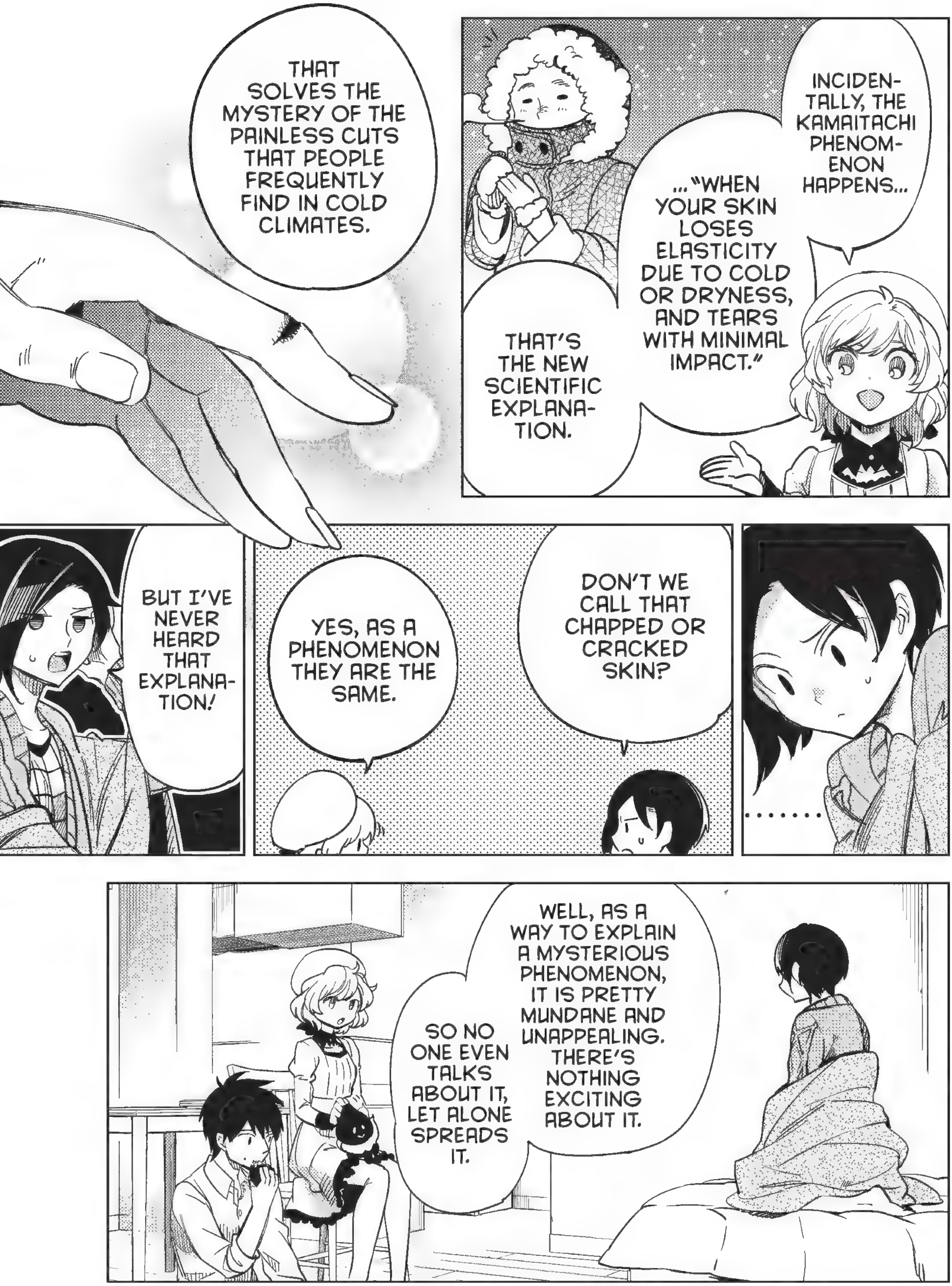
*1868-1912

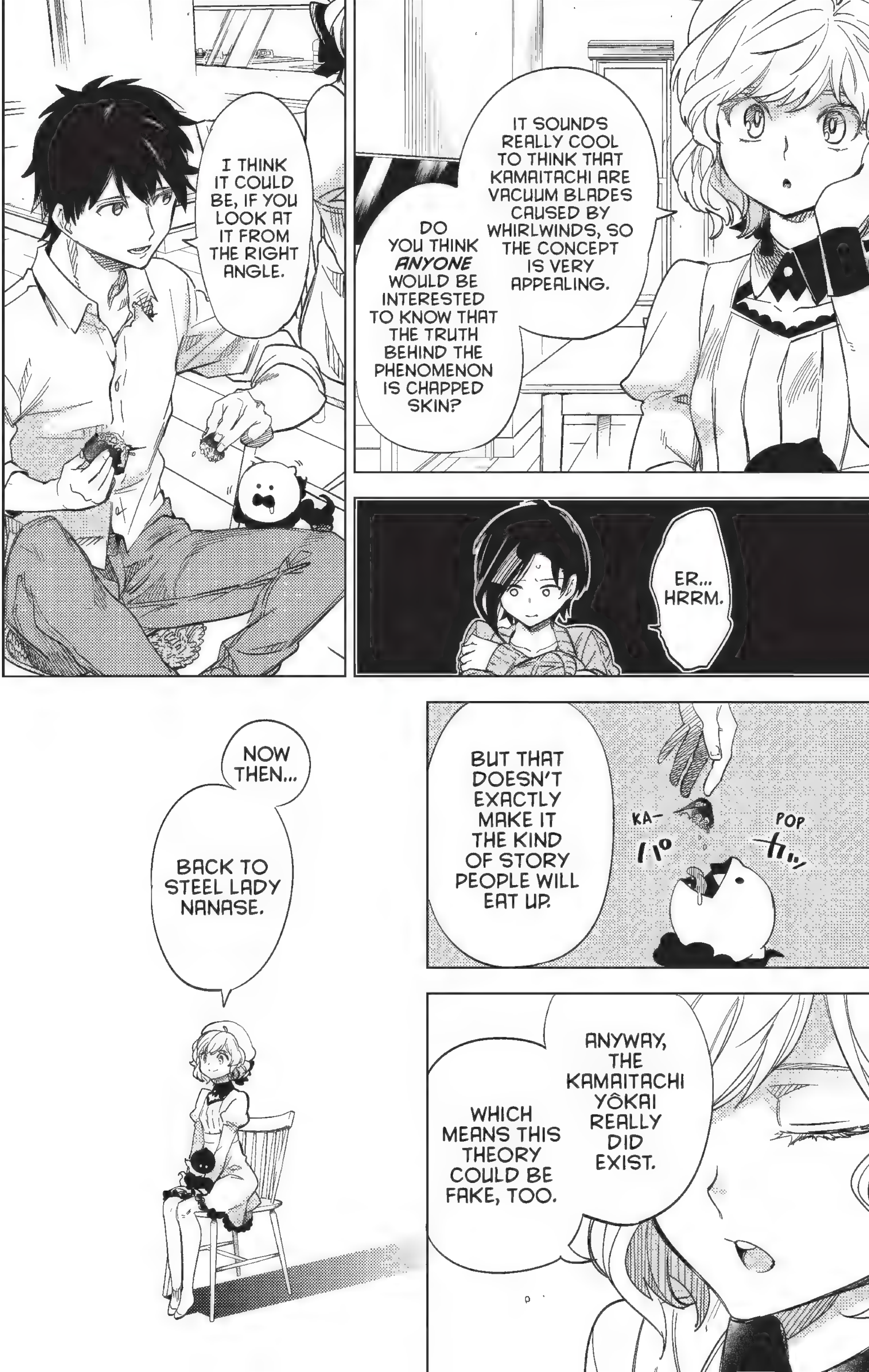
**1926-1989

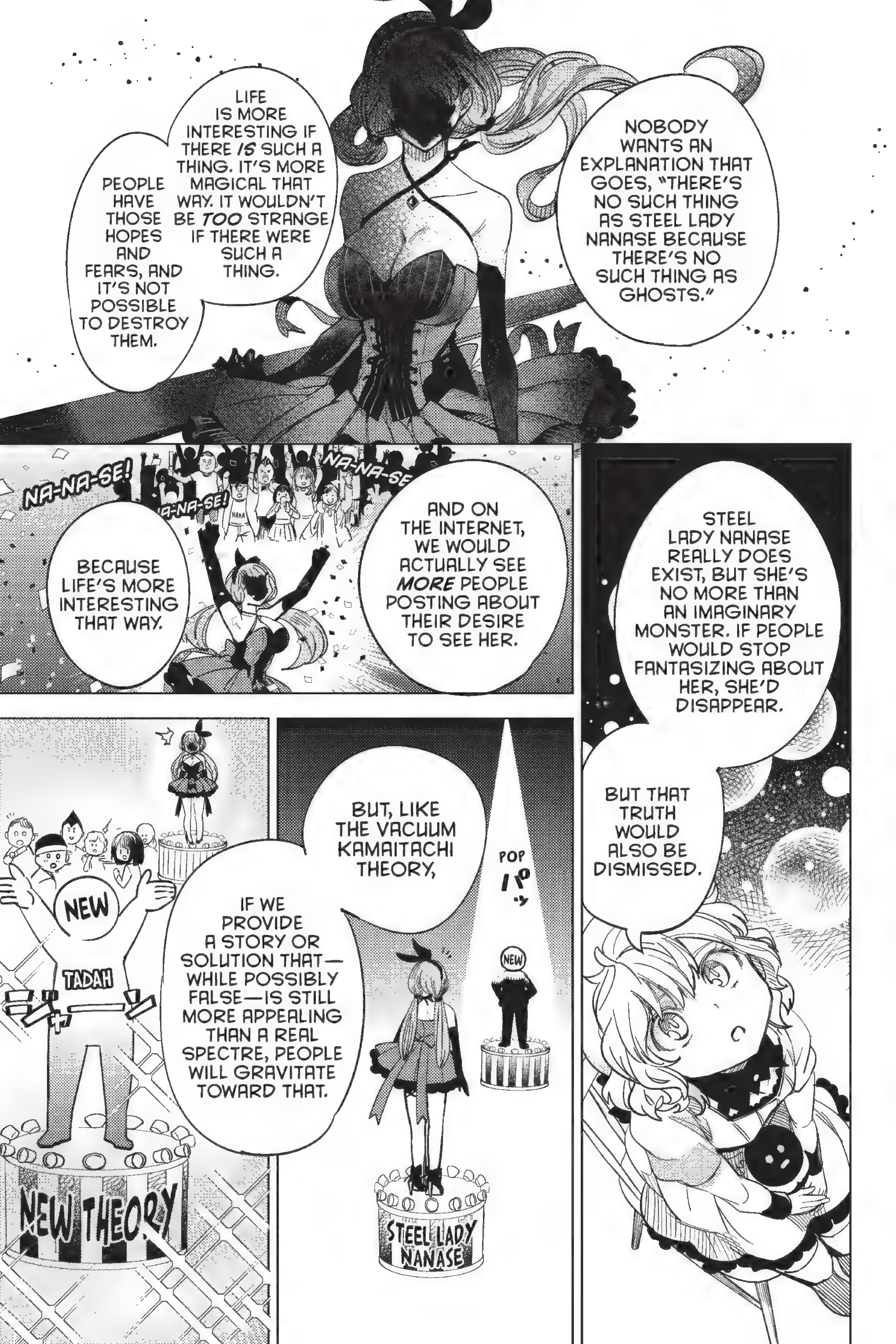

EXPERTS HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT'S SCIENTIFICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.
Hmm...
BUT I'M SURE I READ IT IN A BOOK OR SOMETHING...
MUNCH
もぐ
THE FICTION WAS MADE REALITY.
THERE WAS NO DEFINITE PROOF, BUT EVERYONE BELIEVED IT WAS TRUE, SO IT BECAME THE NUMBER ONE EXPLANATION.
IT WAS MUCH MORE PLAUSIBLE THAN THE YÔKAI THEORY, AND EASIER TO UNDERSTAND.
VACUUM THEORY

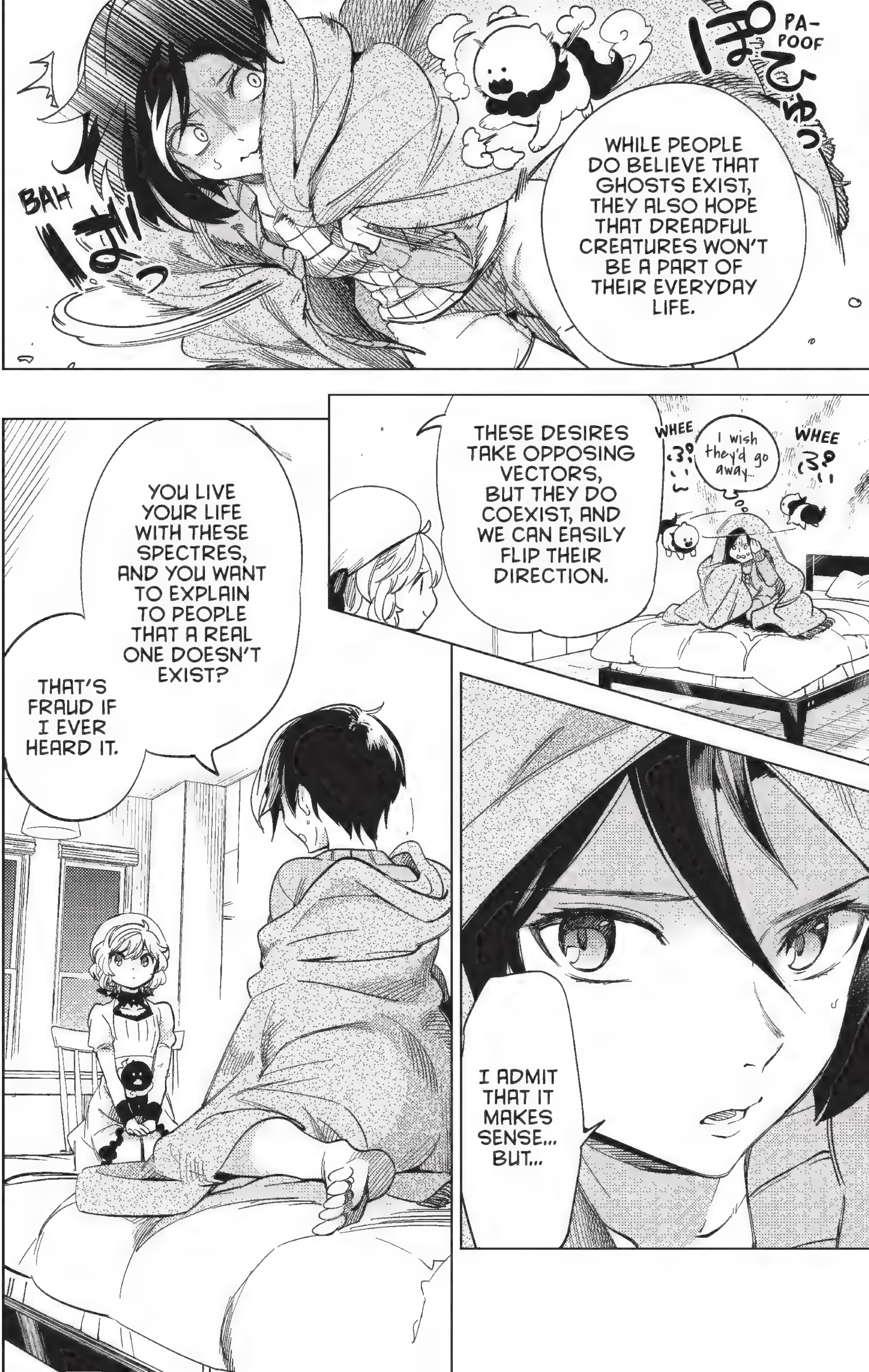

THE VACUUM THEORY MAY BE FALSE, BUT IF THE STORY IS BETTER THAN ONE ABOUT SICKLE WEASELS...
Yeah, kamaitachi can't be real.
Mm-hm.
Mm-hm.
Okay.
WHAAA?!
IT CAN STILL ERASE THE YÔKAI, EVEN IF IT'S A LIE.
We're going back to the mountains!
...

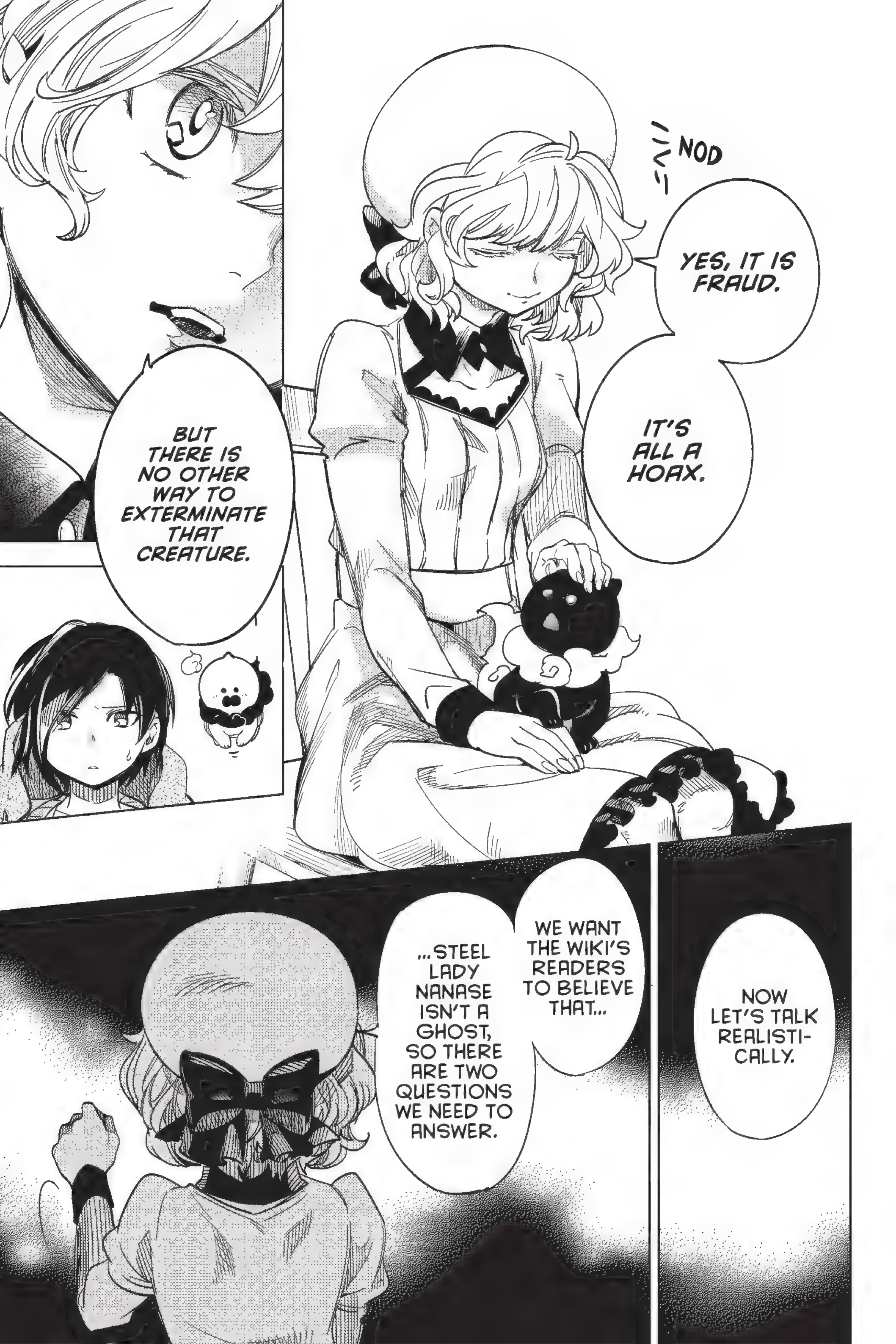

SO...BY BELIEVING THE LIE, I WAS CONTRIBUTING...
...TO MONSTERCIDE BY FICTION, WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT?
SO IF A LIE BECOMES TRUTH, THAT NEW TRUTH CAN BE SHAKEN BY ANOTHER LIE,
AND CAN GO BACK TO BEING A LIE.

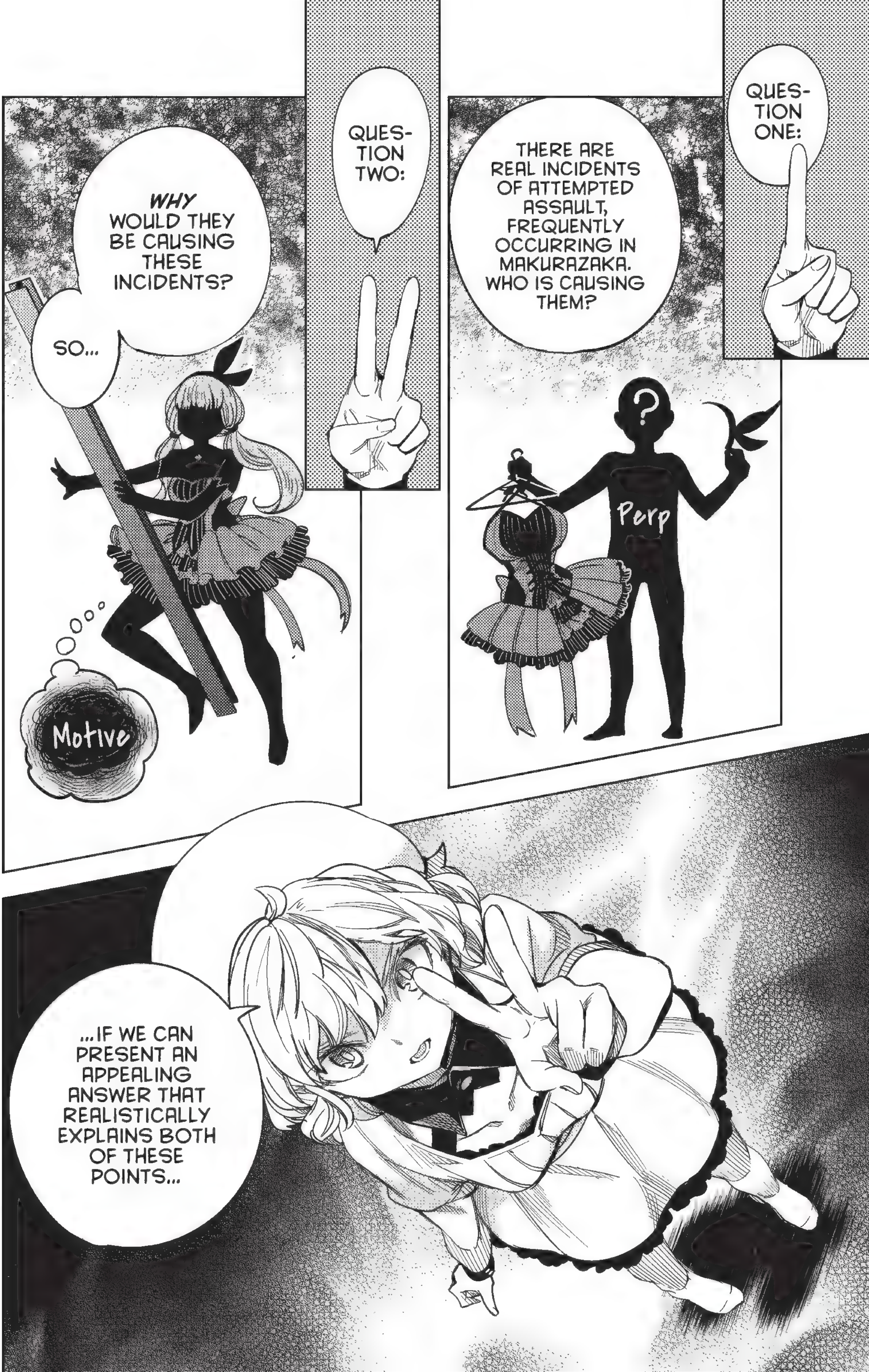

INCIDENTALLY, THE KAMAITACHI PHENOMENON HAPPENS...
..."WHEN YOUR SKIN LOSES ELASTICITY DUE TO COLD OR DRYNESS, AND TEARS WITH MINIMAL IMPACT."
THAT'S THE NEW SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION.
THAT SOLVES THE MYSTERY OF THE PAINLESS CUTS THAT PEOPLE FREQUENTLY FIND IN COLD CLIMATES.
....
DON'T WE CALL THAT CHAPPED OR CRACKED SKIN?
YES, AS A PHENOMENON THEY ARE THE SAME.
BUT I'VE NEVER HEARD THAT EXPLANATION!
WELL, AS A WAY TO EXPLAIN A MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENON, IT IS PRETTY MUNDANE AND UNAPPEALING. THERE'S NOTHING EXCITING ABOUT IT.
SO NO ONE EVEN TALKS ABOUT IT, LET ALONE SPREADS IT.

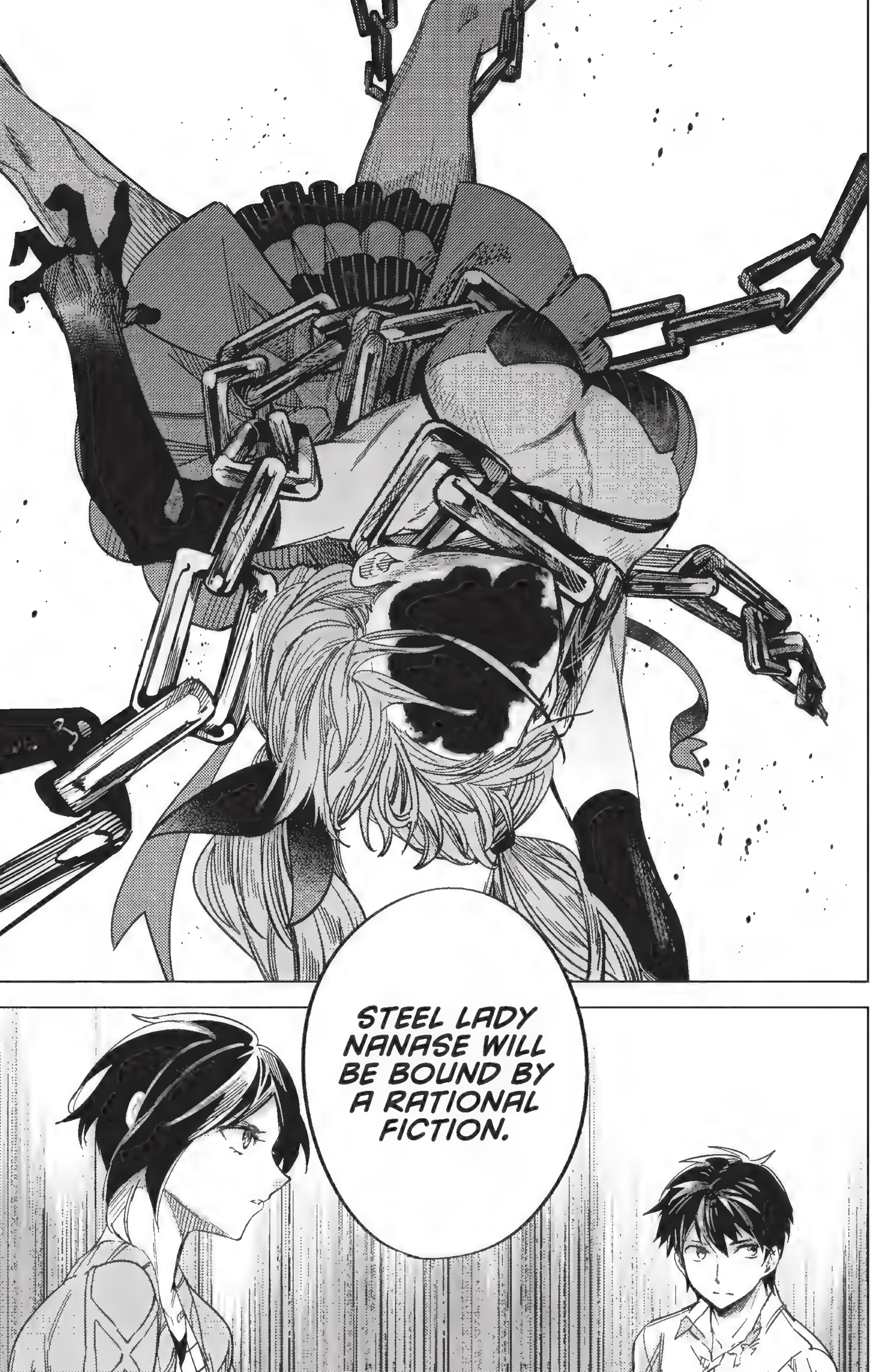

IT SOUNDS REALLY COOL TO THINK THAT KAMAITACHI ARE VACUUM BLADES CAUSED BY WHIRLWINDS, SO THE CONCEPT IS VERY APPEALING.
DO YOU THINK *ANYONE* WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT THE TRUTH BEHIND THE PHENOMENON IS CHAPPED SKIN?
I THINK IT COULD BE, IF YOU LOOK AT IT FROM THE RIGHT ANGLE.
ER... HRRM.
BUT THAT DOESN'T EXACTLY MAKE IT THE KIND OF STORY PEOPLE WILL EAT UP.
KA-
POP
ANYWAY, THE KAMAITACHI YÔKAI REALLY DID EXIST.
WHICH MEANS THIS THEORY COULD BE FAKE, TOO.
NOW THEN...
BACK TO STEEL LADY NANASE.

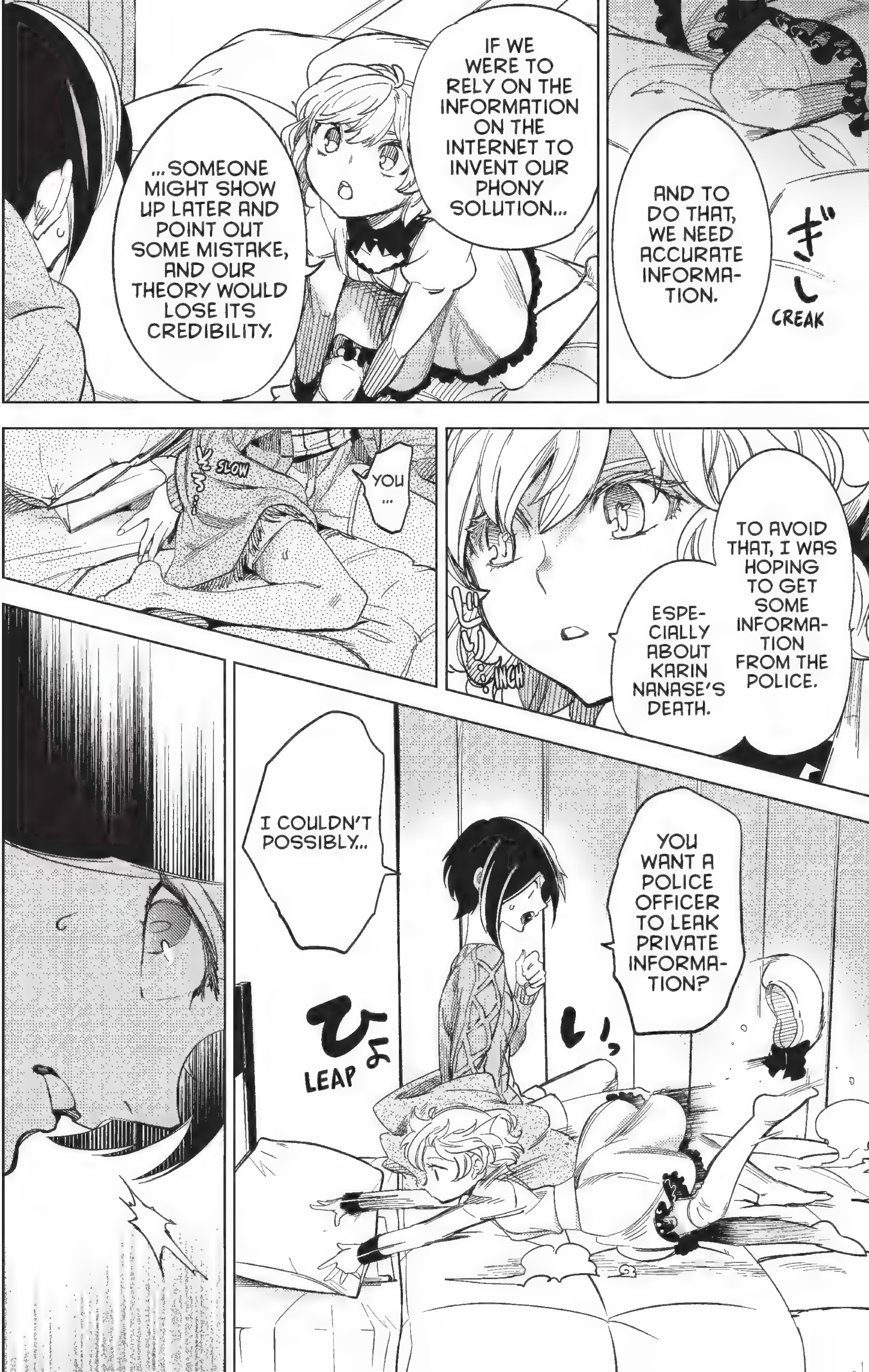

NOBODY WANTS AN EXPLANATION THAT GOES, "THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS STEEL LADY NANASE BECAUSE THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS GHOSTS."
LIFE IS MORE INTERESTING IF THERE *IS* SUCH A THING. IT'S MORE MAGICAL THAT WAY. IT WOULDN'T BE *TOO* STRANGE IF THERE WERE SUCH A THING.
PEOPLE HAVE THOSE HOPES AND FEARS, AND IT'S NOT POSSIBLE TO DESTROY THEM.
NA-NA-SE
NA-NA-SE!
NA-NA-SE!
NANA
AND ON THE INTERNET, WE WOULD ACTUALLY SEE *MORE* PEOPLE POSTING ABOUT THEIR DESIRE TO SEE HER.
BECAUSE LIFE'S MORE INTERESTING THAT WAY.
STEEL LADY NANASE REALLY DOES EXIST, BUT SHE'S NO MORE THAN AN IMAGINARY MONSTER. IF PEOPLE WOULD STOP FANTASIZING ABOUT HER, SHE'D DISAPPEAR.
BUT THAT TRUTH WOULD ALSO BE DISMISSED.
BUT, LIKE THE VACUUM KAMAITACHI THEORY,
POP
POP
NEW
STEEL LADY NANASE
IF WE PROVIDE A STORY OR SOLUTION THAT—WHILE POSSIBLY FALSE—IS STILL MORE APPEALING THAN A REAL SPECTRE, PEOPLE WILL GRAVITATE TOWARD THAT.
NEW
TADAH
NEW THEORY

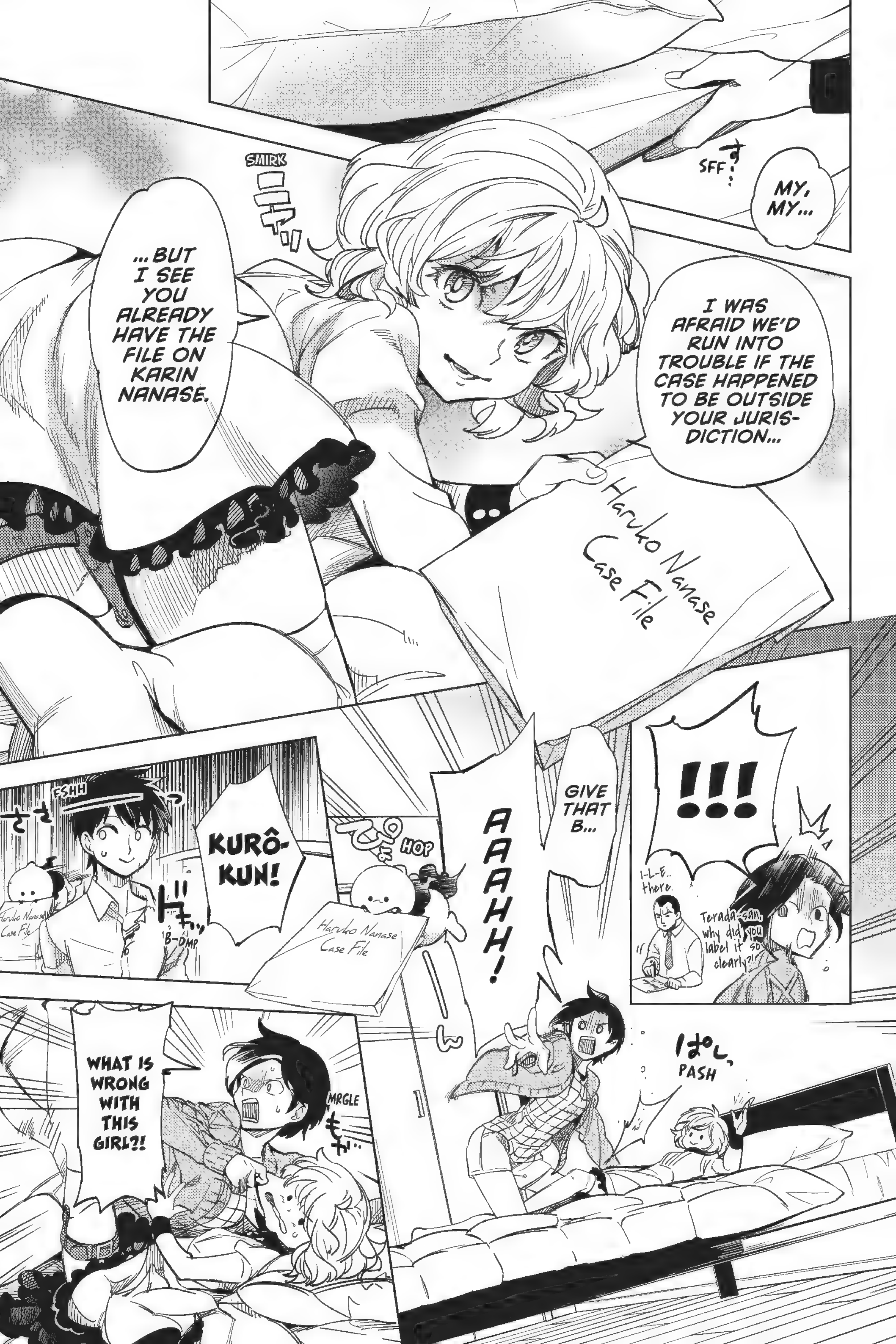

PA-POOF
ぽひゅっ
WHILE PEOPLE DO BELIEVE THAT GHOSTS EXIST, THEY ALSO HOPE THAT DREADFUL CREATURES WON'T BE A PART OF THEIR EVERYDAY LIFE.
BAH
ばっ
WHEE
I wish they'd go away...
WHEE
THESE DESIRES TAKE OPPOSING VECTORS, BUT THEY DO COEXIST, AND WE CAN EASILY FLIP THEIR DIRECTION.
YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE WITH THESE SPECTRES, AND YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN TO PEOPLE THAT A REAL ONE DOESN'T EXIST?
THAT'S FRAUD IF I EVER HEARD IT.
I ADMIT THAT IT MAKES SENSE... BUT...

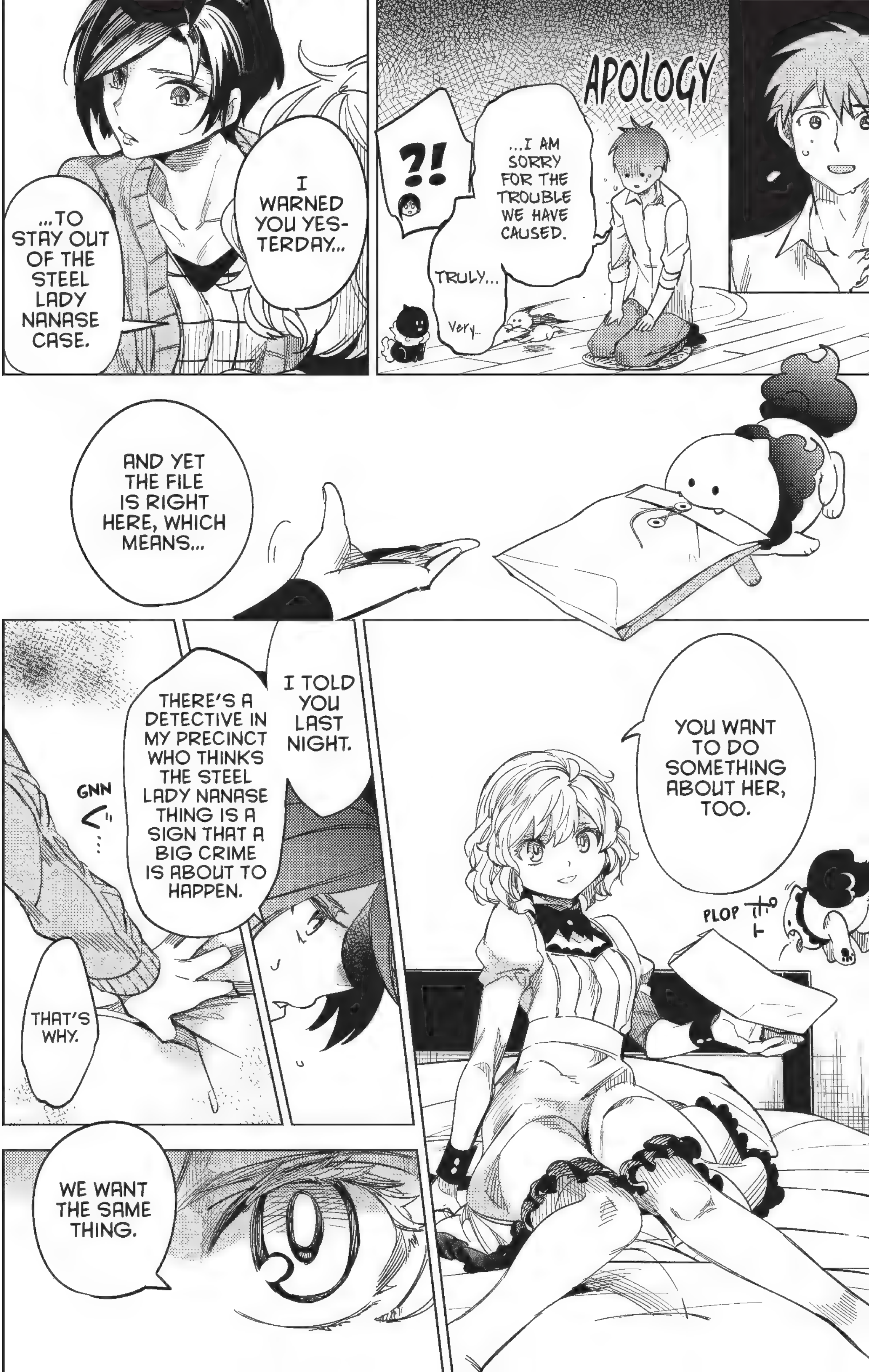

NOD
YES, IT IS FRAUD.
IT'S ALL A HOAX.
BUT THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO EXTERMINATE THAT CREATURE.
NOW LET'S TALK REALISTICALLY.
WE WANT THE WIKI'S READERS TO BELIEVE THAT...
...STEEL LADY NANASE ISN'T A GHOST, SO THERE ARE TWO QUESTIONS WE NEED TO ANSWER.

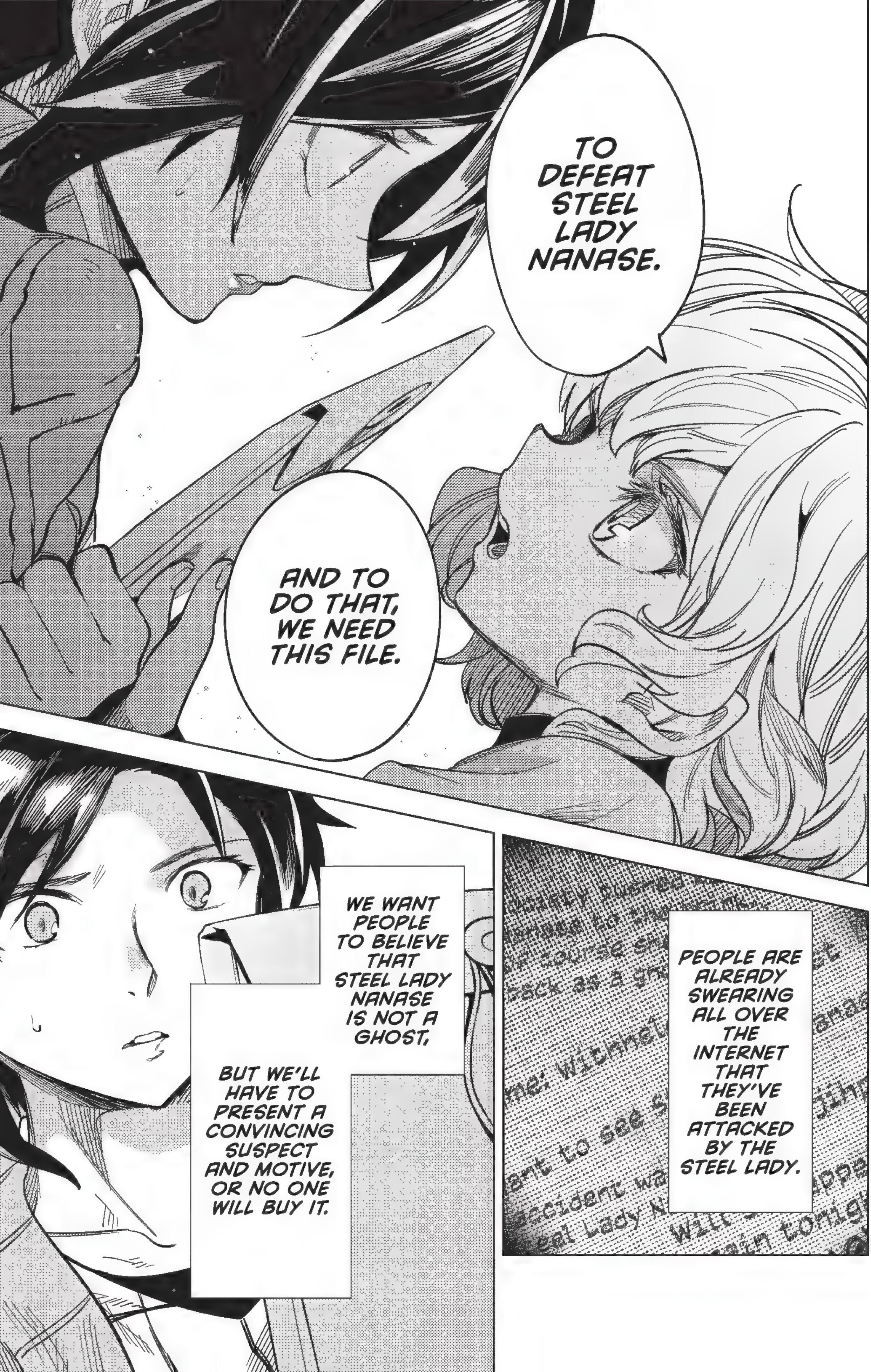

QUESTION ONE:
THERE ARE REAL INCIDENTS OF ATTEMPTED ASSAULT, FREQUENTLY OCCURRING IN MAKURAZAKA. WHO IS CAUSING THEM?
?
Perp
QUESTION TWO:
WHY WOULD THEY BE CAUSING THESE INCIDENTS?
SO...
Motive
...IF WE CAN PRESENT AN APPEALING ANSWER THAT REALISTICALLY EXPLAINS BOTH OF THESE POINTS...

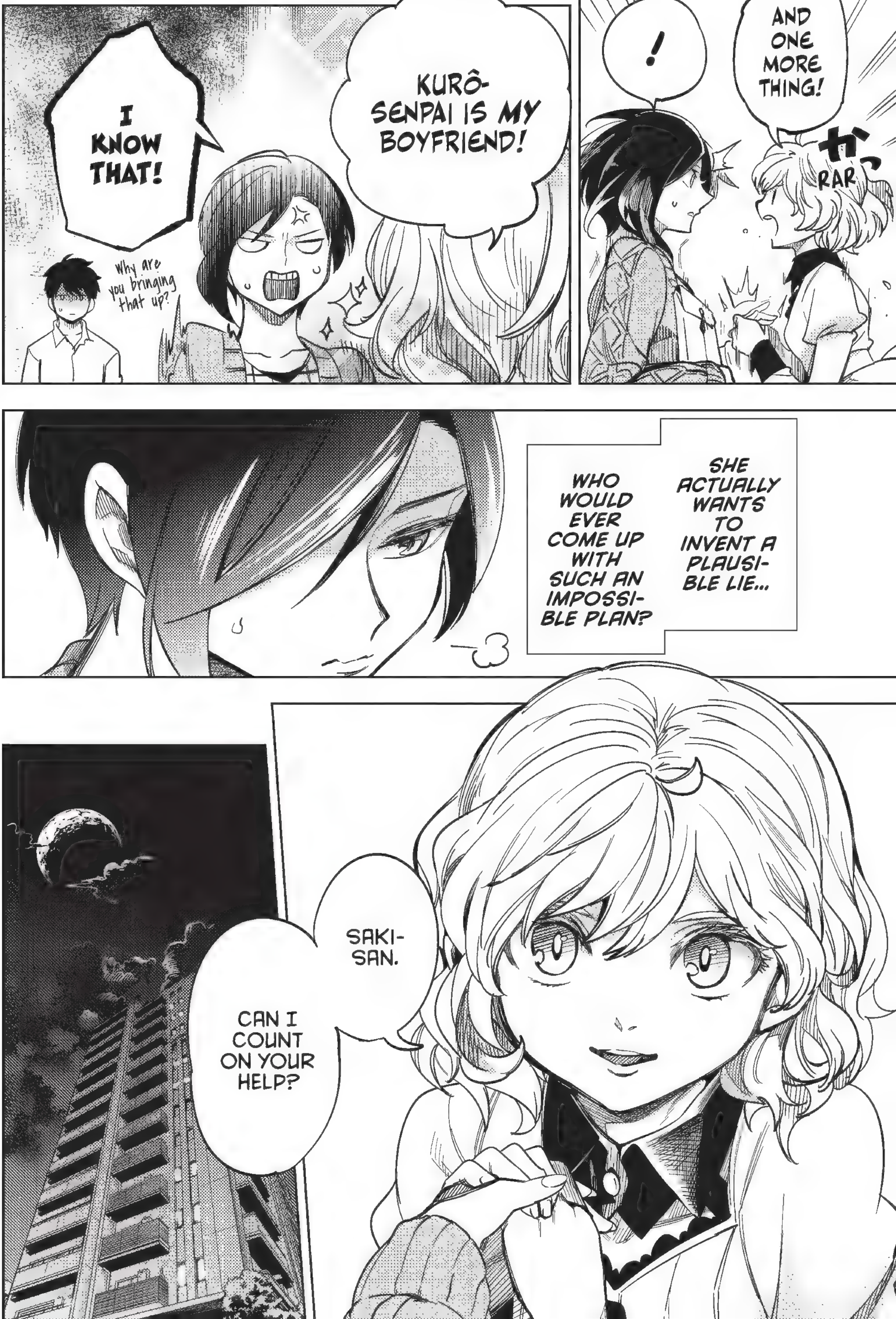

STEEL LADY NANASE WILL BE BOUND BY A RATIONAL FICTION.


AND TO DO THAT, WE NEED ACCURATE INFORMATION.
ぎし
CREAK
IF WE WERE TO RELY ON THE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET TO INVENT OUR PHONY SOLUTION...
...SOMEONE MIGHT SHOW UP LATER AND POINT OUT SOME MISTAKE, AND OUR THEORY WOULD LOSE ITS CREDIBILITY.
TO AVOID THAT, I WAS HOPING TO GET SOME INFORMATION FROM THE POLICE.
ESPECIALLY ABOUT KARIN NANASE'S DEATH.
INCH
YOU...
SLOW
YOU WANT A POLICE OFFICER TO LEAK PRIVATE INFORMATION?
I COULDN'T POSSIBLY...
い
ぴょ
LEAP


SFF
す
MY, MY...
I WAS AFRAID WE'D RUN INTO TROUBLE IF THE CASE HAPPENED TO BE OUTSIDE YOUR JURISDICTION...
SMIRK
ニヤッ
...BUT I SEE YOU ALREADY HAVE THE FILE ON KARIN NANASE.
Haruko Nanase Case File
!!!
Terada-san, why did you label it so clearly?!
I-L-E... there.
GIVE THAT B...
AAAAHH!
HOP
Haruko Nanase Case File
KURÔ-KUN!
FSHH
さっ
B-DMP
ドキッ
Haruko Nanase Case File
PASH
ぱし
MRGLE
WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS GIRL?!


APOLOGY
...I AM SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE WE HAVE CAUSED.
?!
TRULY...
Very...
I WARNED YOU YESTERDAY...
...TO STAY OUT OF THE STEEL LADY NANASE CASE.
AND YET THE FILE IS RIGHT HERE, WHICH MEANS...
YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HER, TOO.
PLOP
I TOLD YOU LAST NIGHT.
THERE'S A DETECTIVE IN MY PRECINCT WHO THINKS THE STEEL LADY NANASE THING IS A SIGN THAT A BIG CRIME IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
GNN
THAT'S WHY.
WE WANT THE SAME THING.

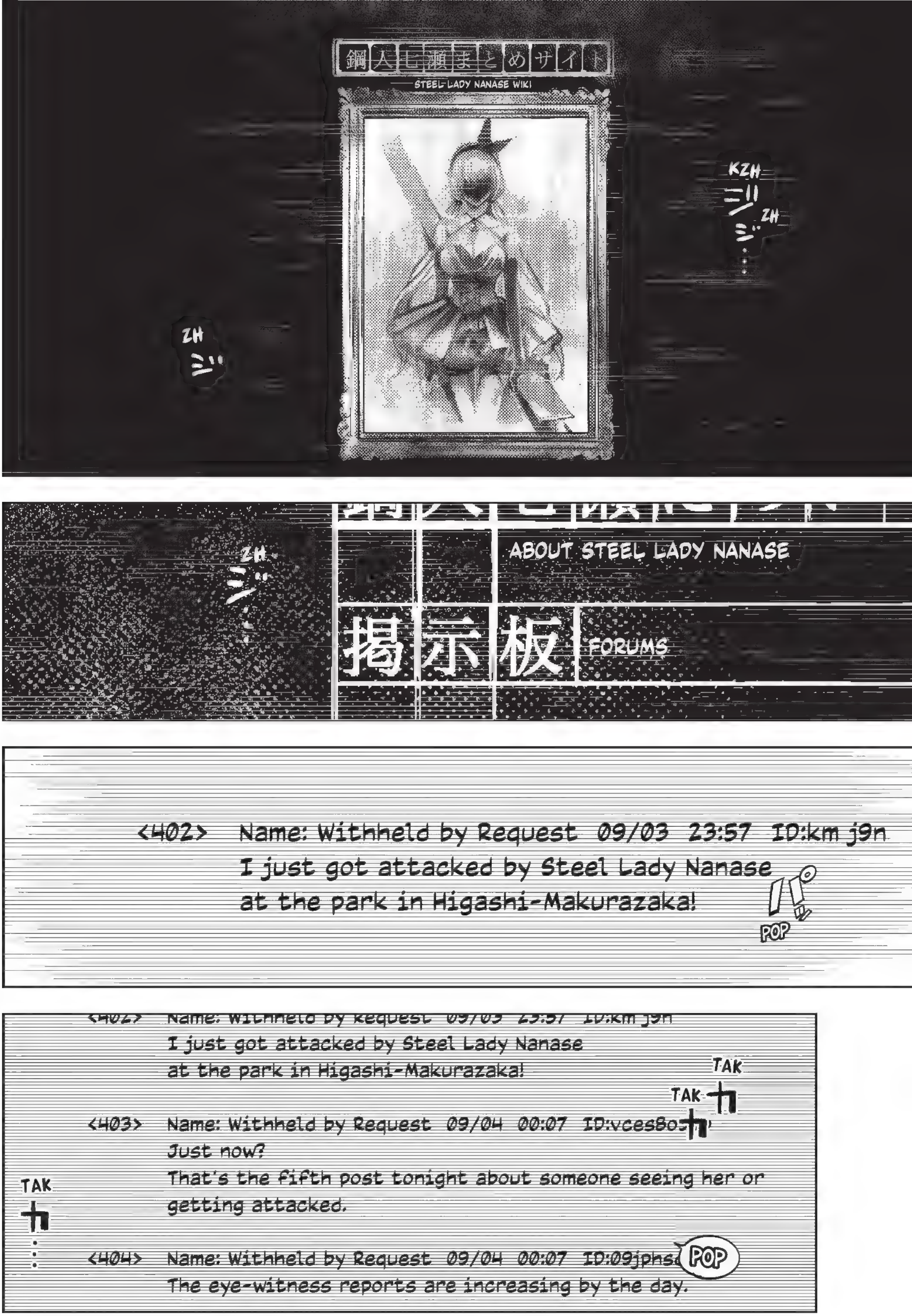

TO DEFEAT STEEL LADY NANASE.
AND TO DO THAT, WE NEED THIS FILE.
PEOPLE ARE ALREADY SWEARING ALL OVER THE INTERNET THAT THEY'VE BEEN ATTACKED BY THE STEEL LADY.
WE WANT PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT STEEL LADY NANASE IS NOT A GHOST,
BUT WE'LL HAVE TO PRESENT A CONVINCING SUSPECT AND MOTIVE, OR NO ONE WILL BUY IT.


AND ONE MORE THING!
!
ガッ
RAR
KURÔ-SENPAI IS MY BOYFRIEND!
I KNOW THAT!
Why are you bringing that up?
SHE ACTUALLY WANTS TO INVENT A PLAUSIBLE LIE...
WHO WOULD EVER COME UP WITH SUCH AN IMPOSSIBLE PLAN?
SAKI-SAN.
CAN I COUNT ON YOUR HELP?

IN/SPECTRE

YÔKAI:
MAKURAGAESHI,
THE PILLOW
FLIPPER

CHAPTER 6: "KARIN NANASE AND HATSUMI NANASE"

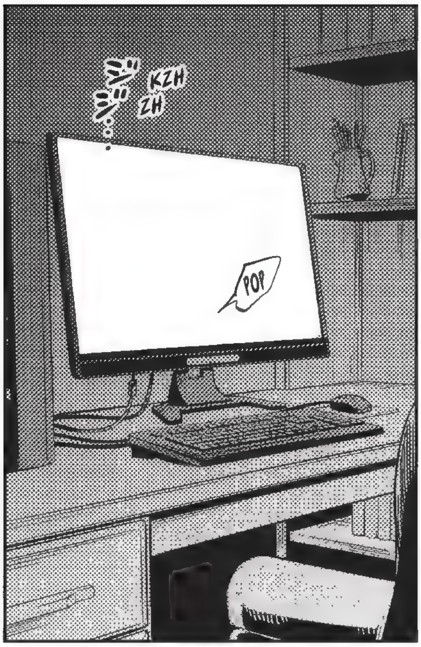

鋼人七瀬まとめサイト
STEEL LADY NANASE WIKI
KZH ジ
ZH ジ
ZH ジ
ZH ジ
ABOUT STEEL LADY NANASE
掲示板
FORUMS
POP
TAK カ
TAK カ
TAK カ
POP

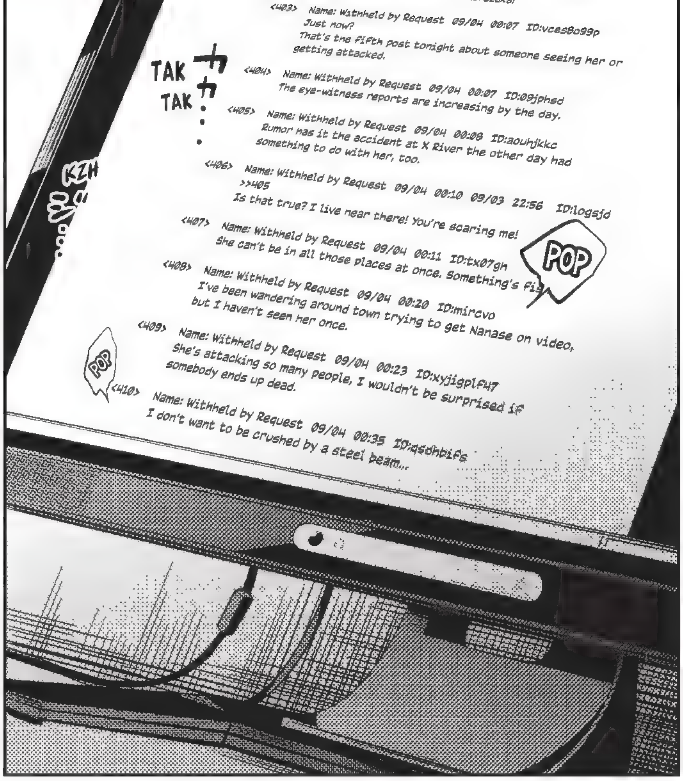
<402> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 23:57 ID:km j9n
I just got attacked by Steel Lady Nanase
at the park in Higashi-Makurazaka!

<402> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 23:57 ID:km j9n
I just got attacked by Steel Lady Nanase
at the park in Higashi-Makurazaka!

<403> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:vces8o
Just now?
That's the fifth post tonight about someone seeing her or getting attacked.

<404> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:09jphs
The eye-witness reports are increasing by the day.





<403> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:vces8o99p
Just now?
That's the fifth post tonight about someone seeing her or getting attacked.

<404> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:09jphsd
The eye-witness reports are increasing by the day.

<405> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:08 ID:aouhjkkc
Rumor has it the accident at X River the other day had something to do with her, too.

<406> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:10 09/03 22:56 ID:logsjd
>>405
Is that true? I live near there! You're scaring me!

<407> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:11 ID:tx07gh
She can't be in all those places at once. Something's fis

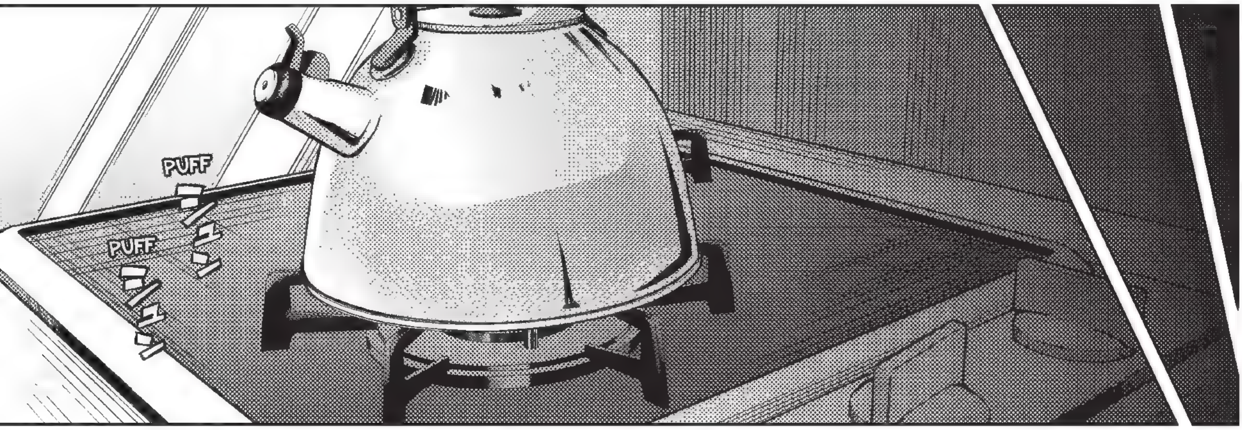
<408> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:20 ID:mircvo
I've been wandering around town trying to get Nanase on video, but I haven't seen her once.

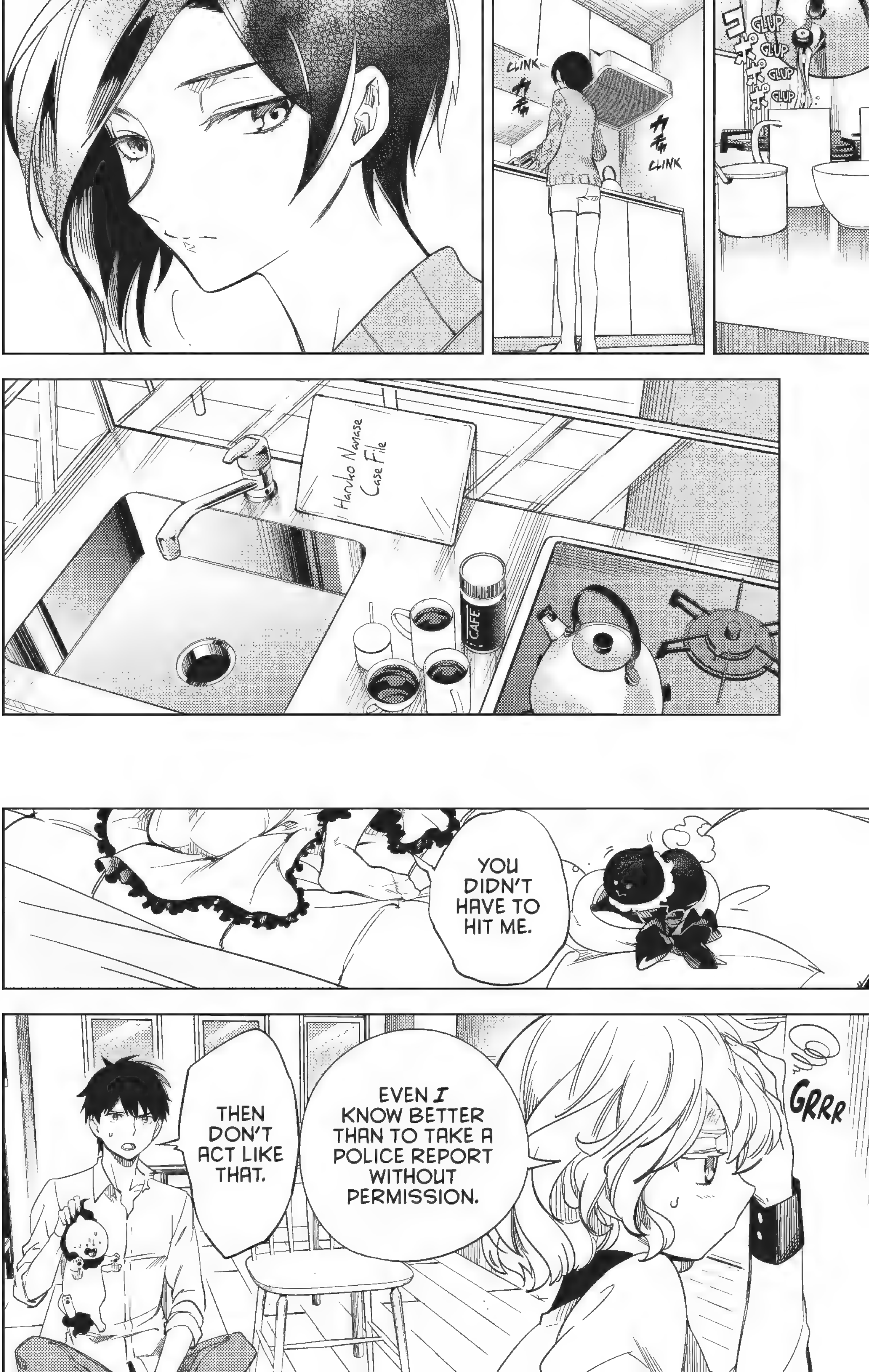
<409> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:23 ID:xyjigplf47
She's attacking so many people, I wouldn't be surprised if somebody ends up dead.

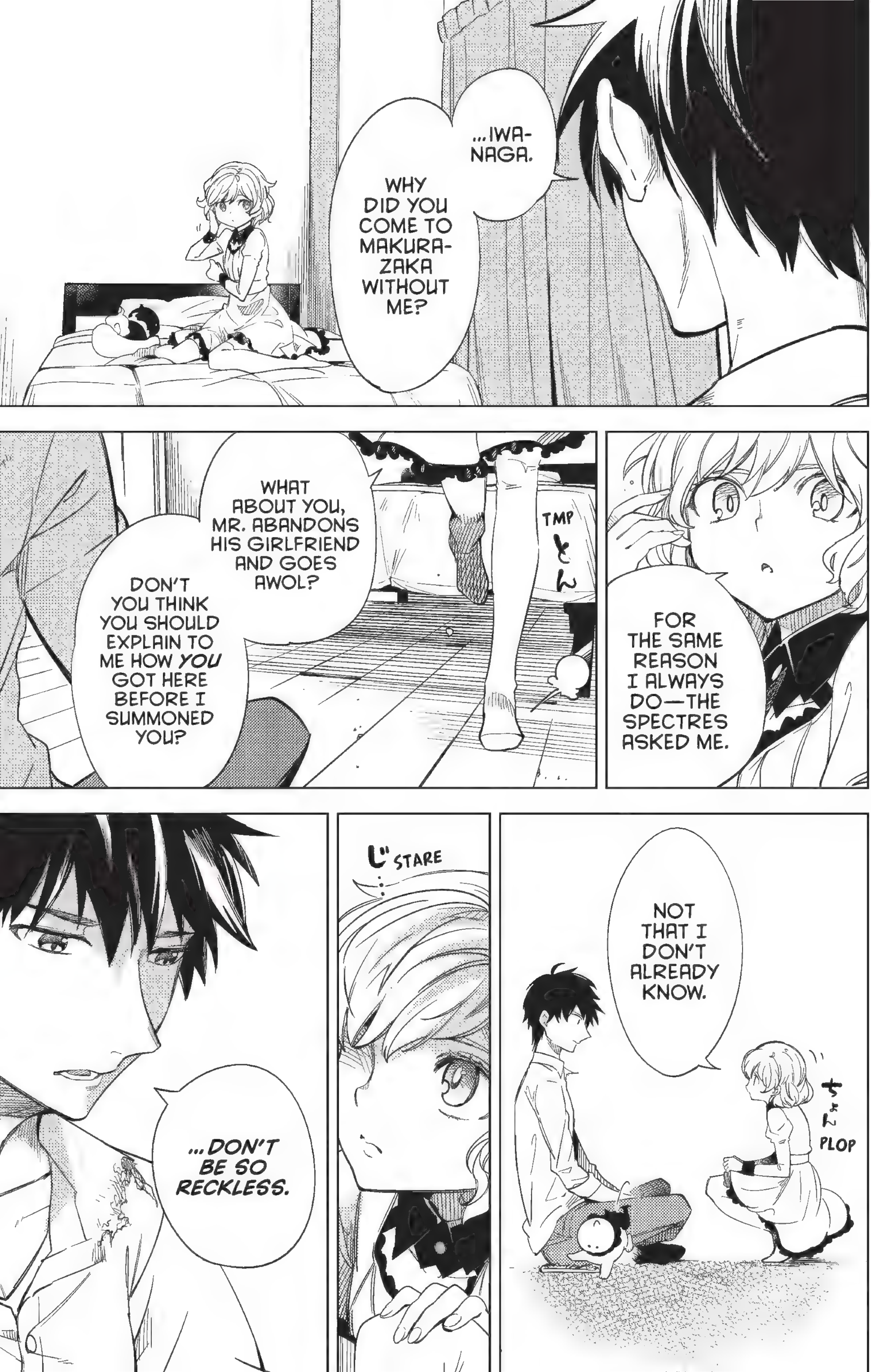
<410> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:35 ID:qsdhbifs
I don't want to be crushed by a steel beam...

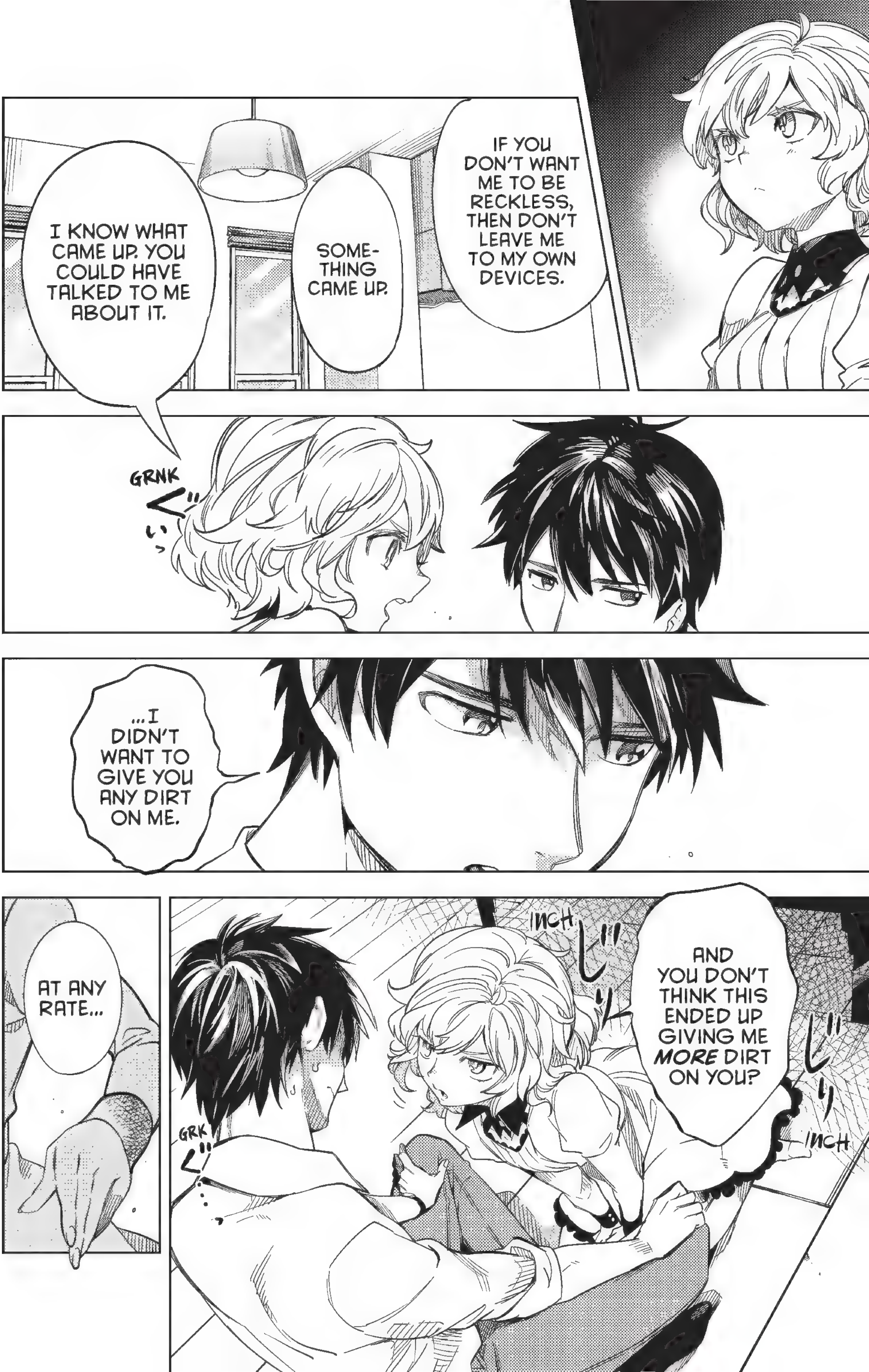
<410> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:35 ID:qsdhbifs
I don't want to be crushed by a steel beam...

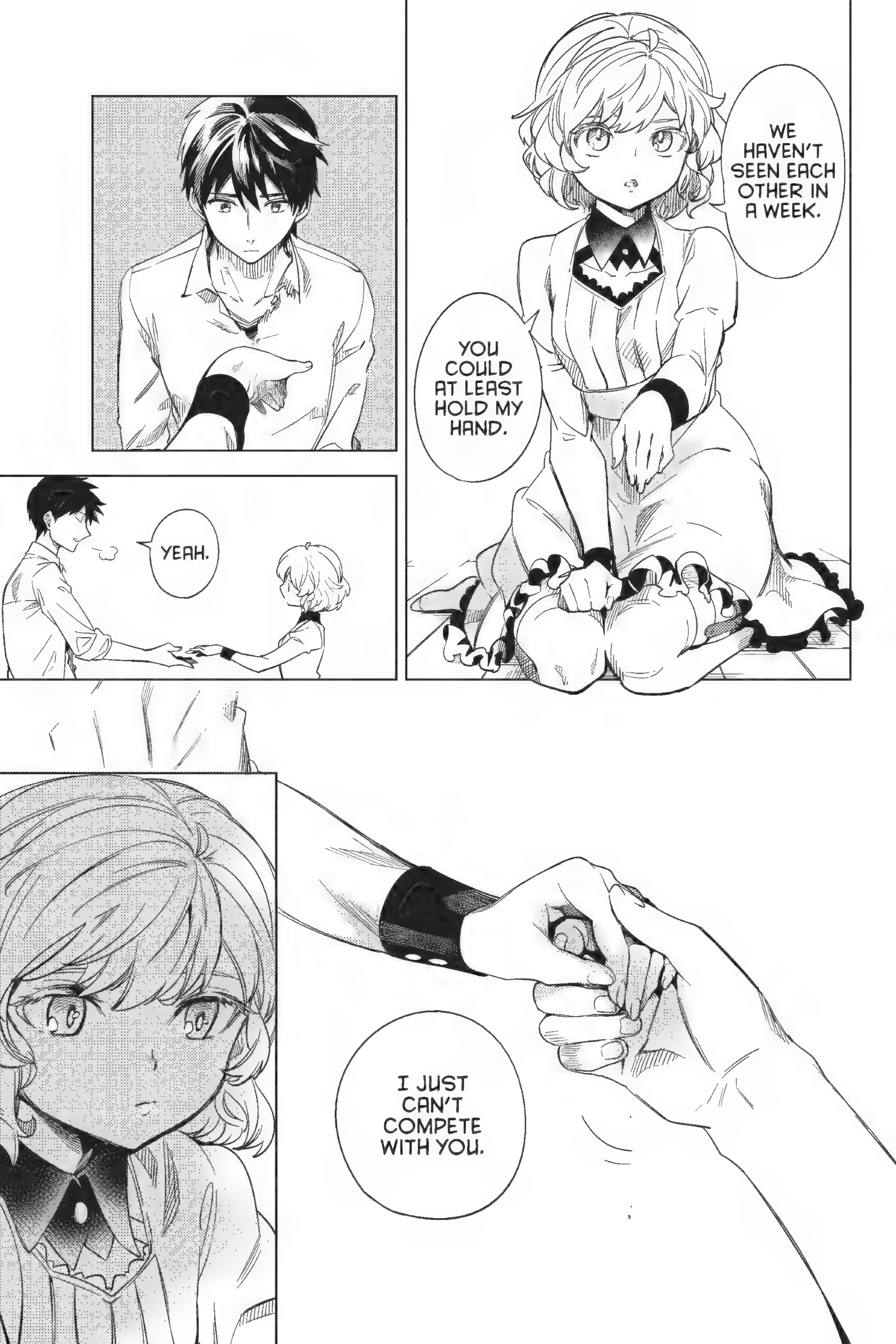
<411> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:38 ID:9pplkouk974j
I don't want to be crushed, but I would like to meet Steel Lady Nanase. The ghost of a beautiful pop star with a big rack? Yes, please!

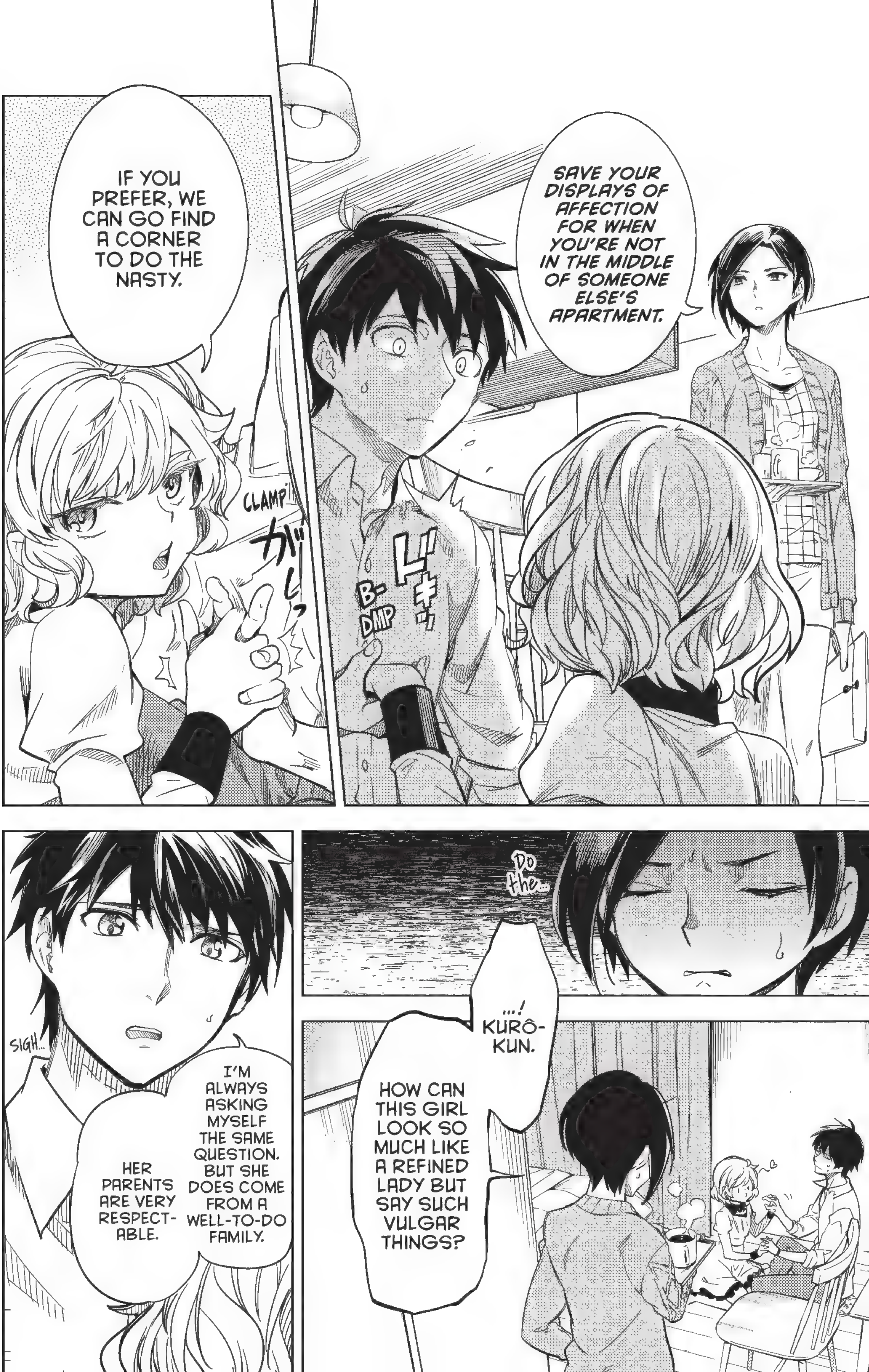


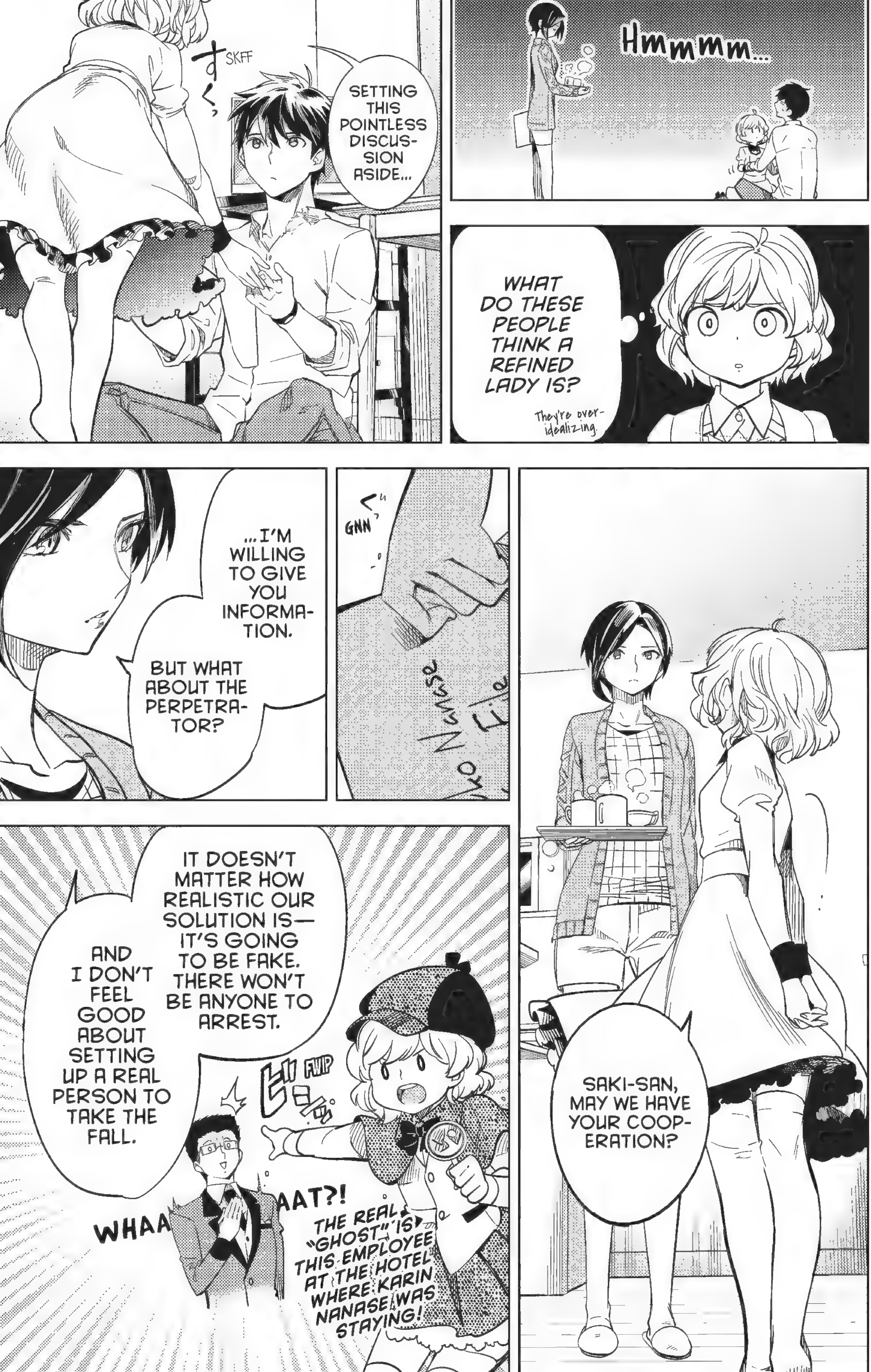

GLUP
GLUP
GLUP
GLUP
CLINK
カチャ
カチャ
CLINK
Haruko Nanase Case File
CAFE
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO HIT ME.
GRRR
EVEN *I* KNOW BETTER THAN TO TAKE A POLICE REPORT WITHOUT PERMISSION.
THEN DON'T ACT LIKE THAT.

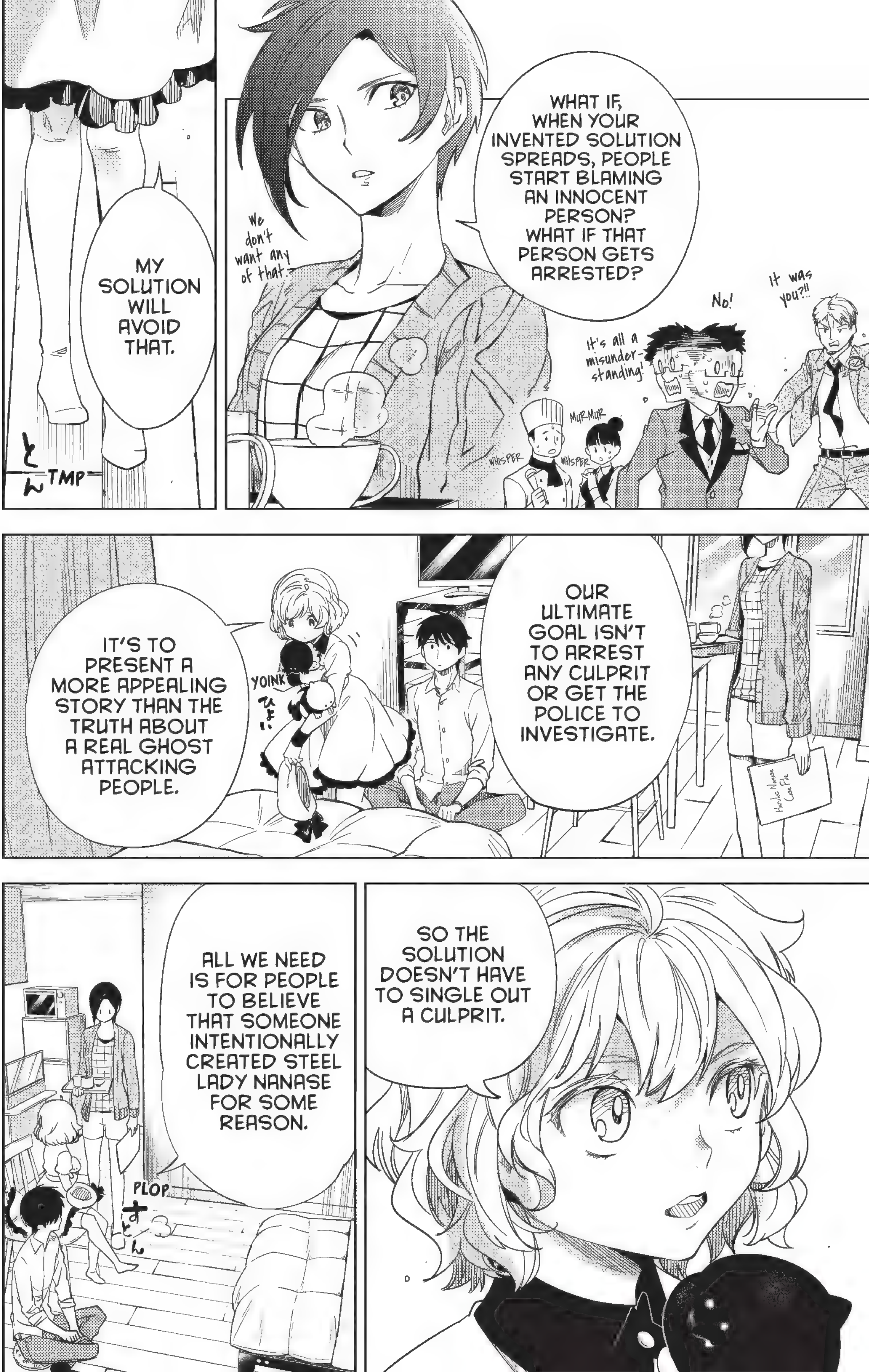

...IWANAGA.
WHY DID YOU COME TO MAKURAZAKA WITHOUT ME?
FOR THE SAME REASON I ALWAYS DO—THE SPECTRES ASKED ME.
TMP とん
WHAT ABOUT YOU, MR. ABANDONS HIS GIRLFRIEND AND GOES AWOL?
DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN TO ME HOW *YOU* GOT HERE BEFORE I SUMMONED YOU?
NOT THAT I DON'T ALREADY KNOW.
ちょん PLOP
じ STARE
...DON'T BE SO RECKLESS.

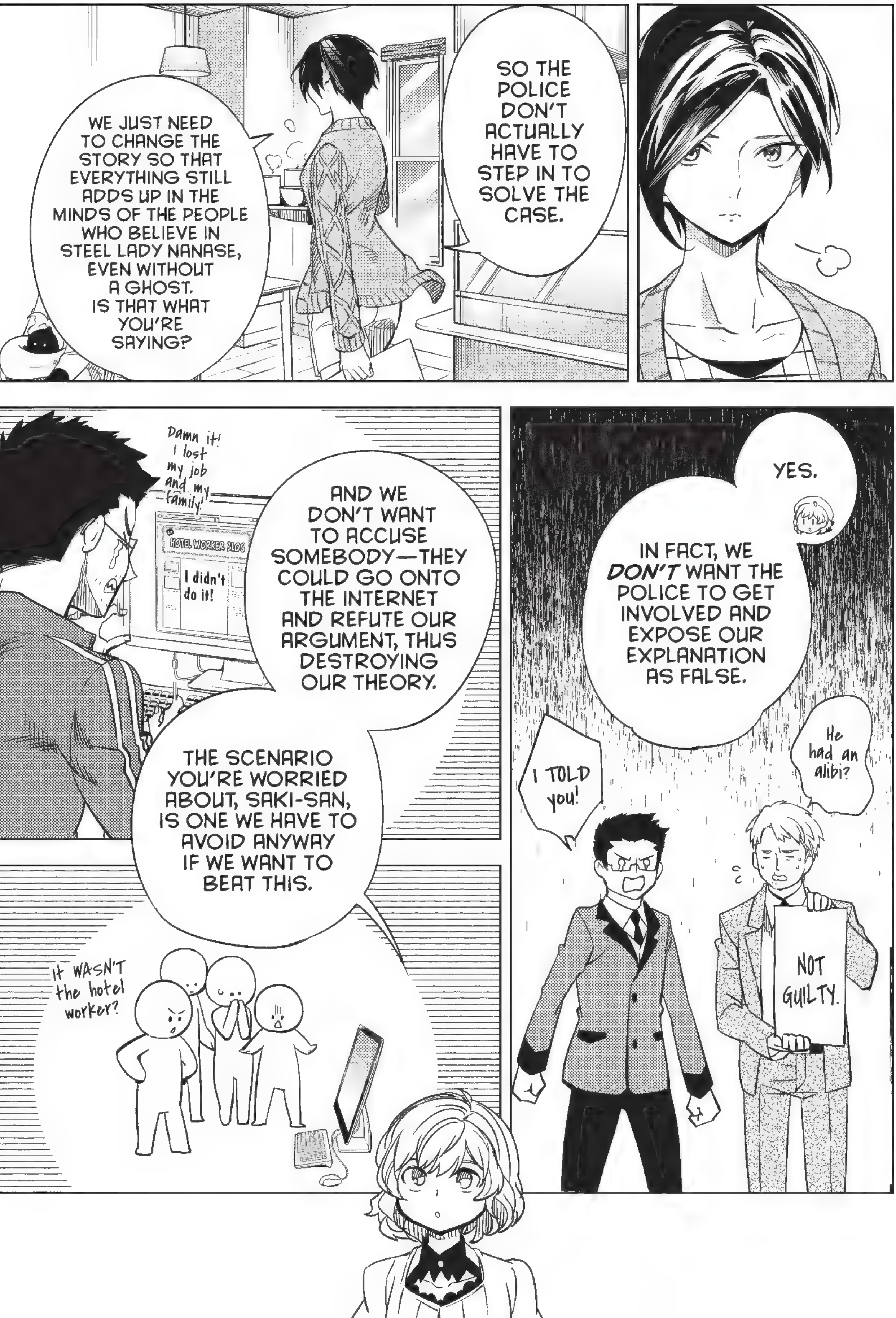

IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO BE RECKLESS, THEN DON'T LEAVE ME TO MY OWN DEVICES.
SOMETHING CAME UP.
I KNOW WHAT CAME UP. YOU COULD HAVE TALKED TO ME ABOUT IT.
GRNK
...I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE YOU ANY DIRT ON ME.
INCH
AND YOU DON'T THINK THIS ENDED UP GIVING ME *MORE* DIRT ON YOU?
INCH
GRK
AT ANY RATE...

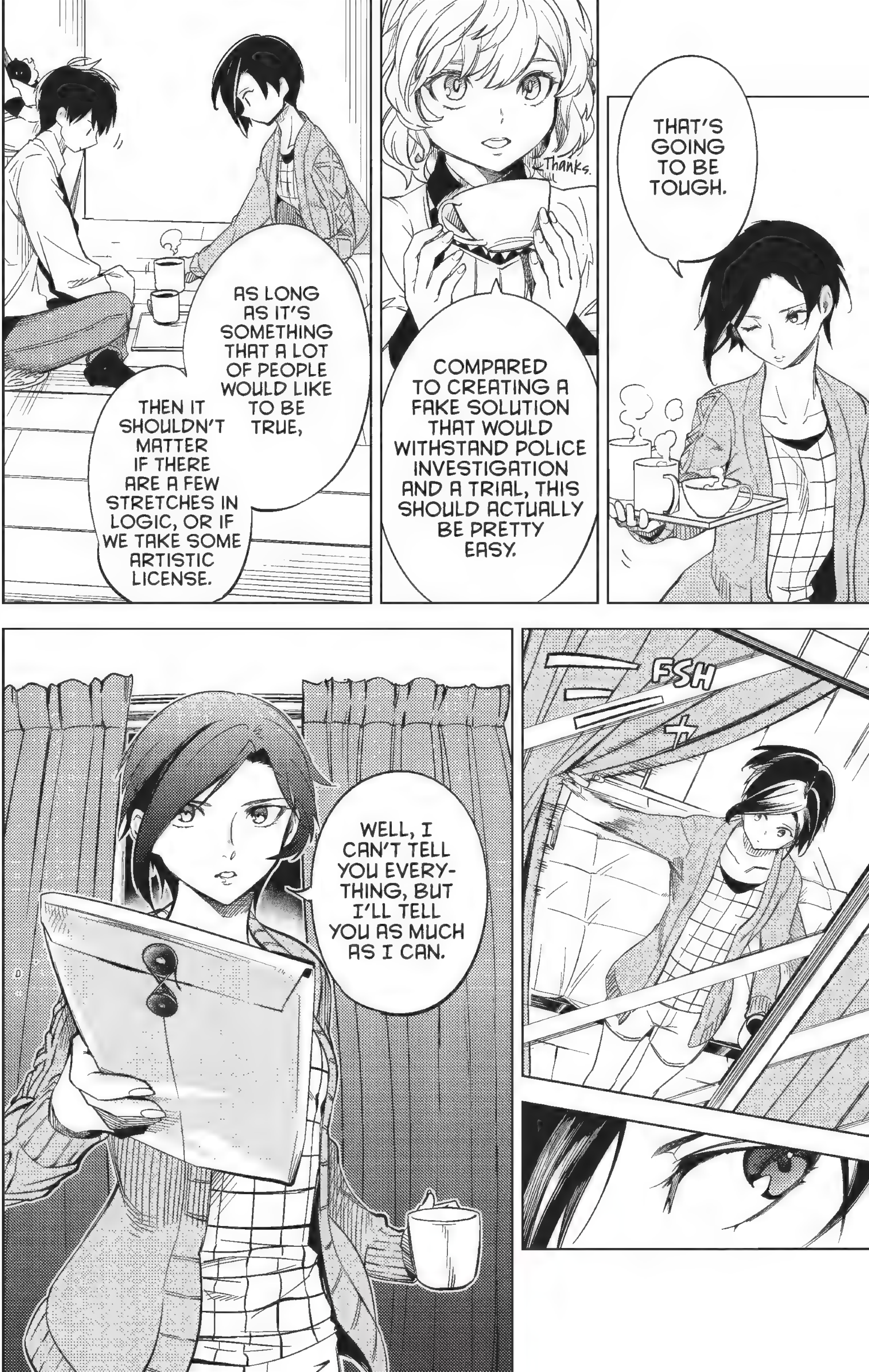

WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN A WEEK.
YOU COULD AT LEAST HOLD MY HAND.
YEAH.
I JUST CAN'T COMPETE WITH YOU.

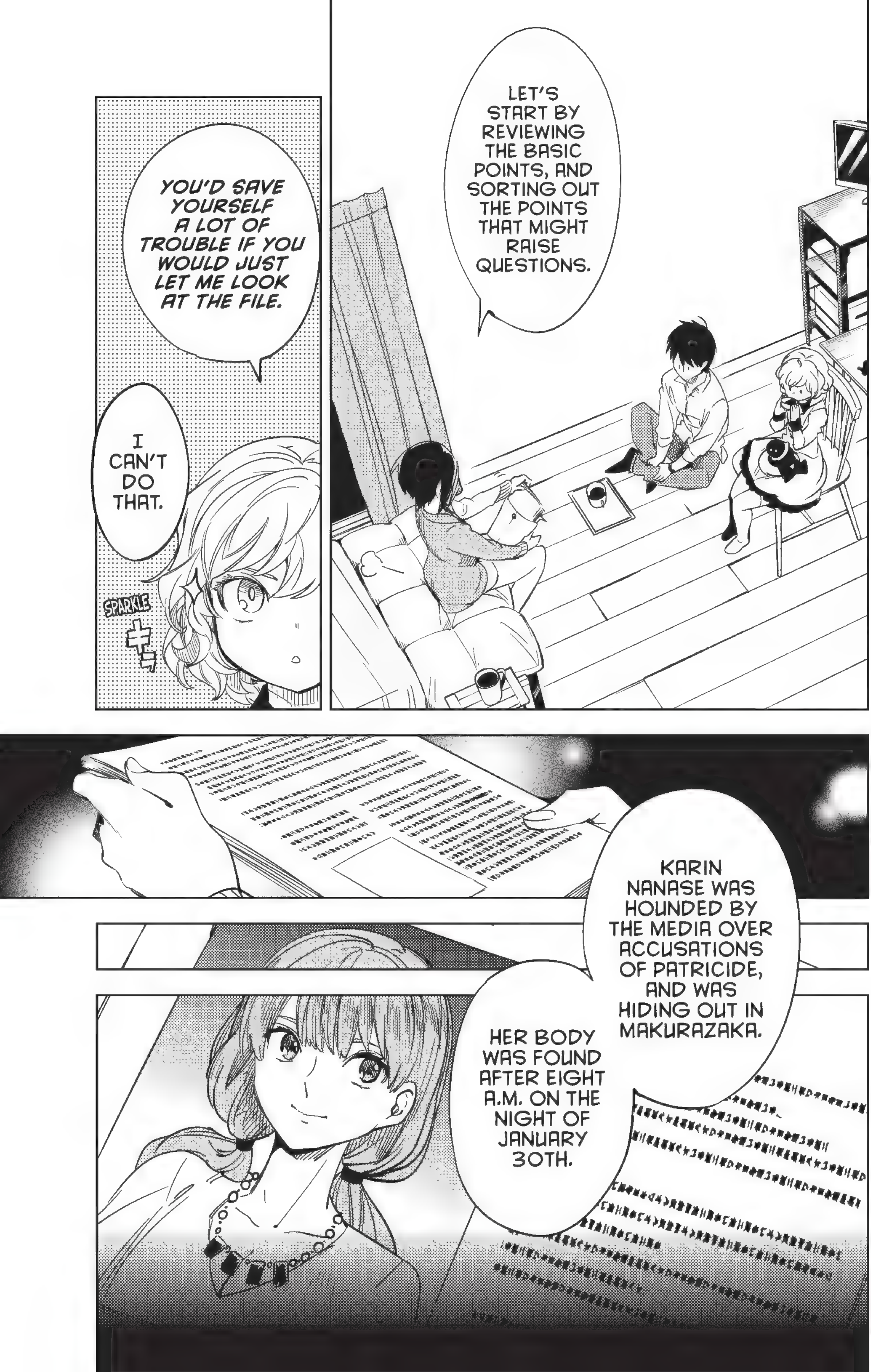

SAVE YOUR DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION FOR WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S APARTMENT.
B-DMP
IF YOU PREFER, WE CAN GO FIND A CORNER TO DO THE NASTY.
CLAMP
Do the...
...! KURÔ-KUN.
HOW CAN THIS GIRL LOOK SO MUCH LIKE A REFINED LADY BUT SAY SUCH VULGAR THINGS?
SIGH...
I'M ALWAYS ASKING MYSELF THE SAME QUESTION. BUT SHE DOES COME FROM A WELL-TO-DO FAMILY.
HER PARENTS ARE VERY RESPECTABLE.

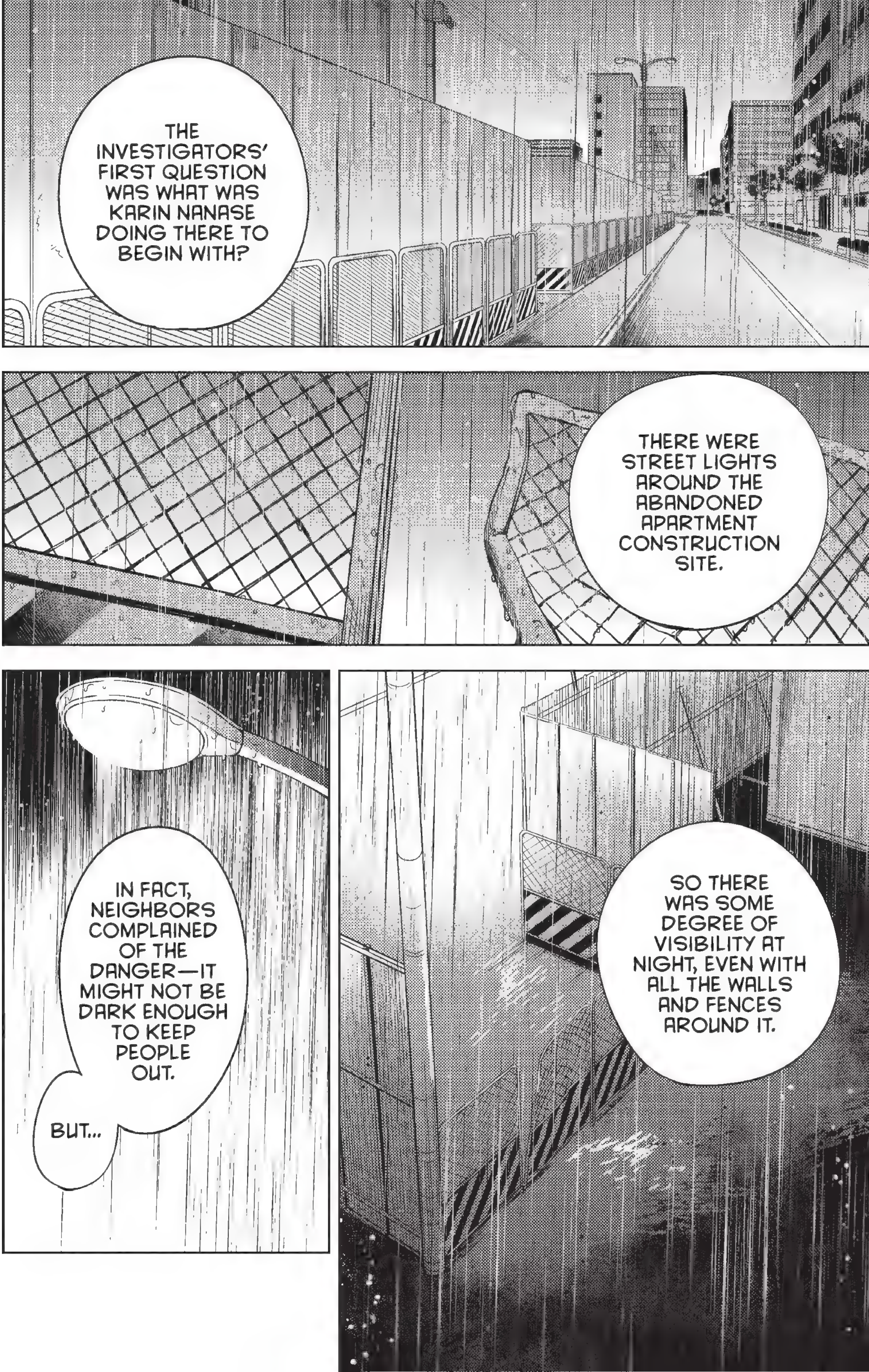

Hmmmm...
WHAT DO THESE PEOPLE THINK A REFINED LADY IS?
They're over-idealizing.
すくっ SKFF
SETTING THIS POINTLESS DISCUSSION ASIDE...
SAKI-SAN, MAY WE HAVE YOUR COOPERATION?
ぐっ GNN
...I'M WILLING TO GIVE YOU INFORMATION.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PERPETRATOR?
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW REALISTIC OUR SOLUTION IS—IT'S GOING TO BE FAKE. THERE WON'T BE ANYONE TO ARREST.
AND I DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT SETTING UP A REAL PERSON TO TAKE THE FALL.
THE REAL "GHOST" IS THIS EMPLOYEE AT THE HOTEL WHERE KARIN NANASE WAS STAYING!
ビシッ FWIP
WHAAAAT?!

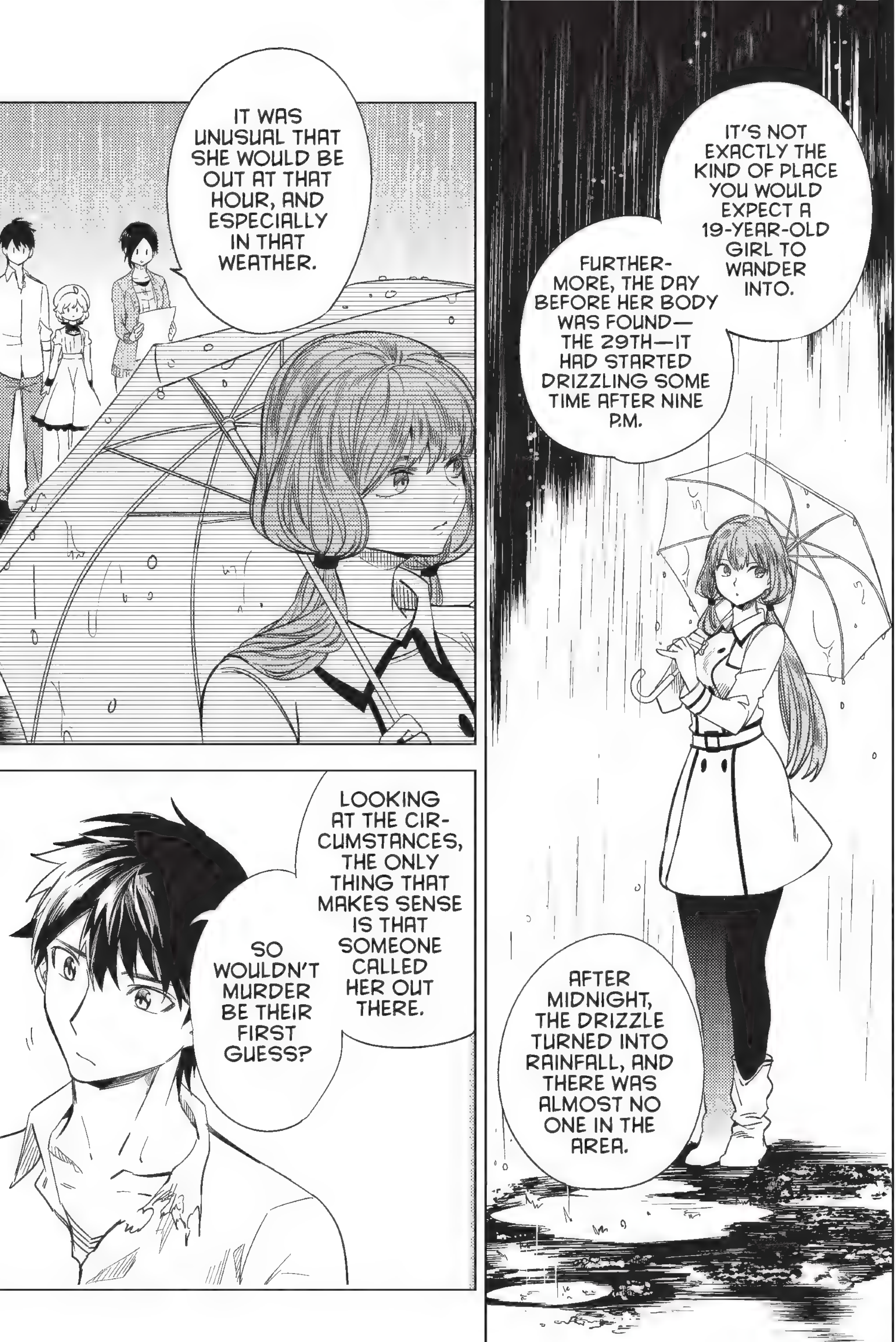

WHAT IF, WHEN YOUR INVENTED SOLUTION SPREADS, PEOPLE START BLAMING AN INNOCENT PERSON? WHAT IF THAT PERSON GETS ARRESTED?
It was you?!!
No!
It's all a misunderstanding!
MURMUR
WHISPER
WHISPER
We don't want any of that
MY SOLUTION WILL AVOID THAT.
とん TMP
OUR ULTIMATE GOAL ISN'T TO ARREST ANY CULPRIT OR GET THE POLICE TO INVESTIGATE.
Haruko Nanase Case File
IT'S TO PRESENT A MORE APPEALING STORY THAN THE TRUTH ABOUT A REAL GHOST ATTACKING PEOPLE.
YOINK ひょい
SO THE SOLUTION DOESN'T HAVE TO SINGLE OUT A CULPRIT.
ALL WE NEED IS FOR PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE INTENTIONALLY CREATED STEEL LADY NANASE FOR SOME REASON.
PLOP すとん

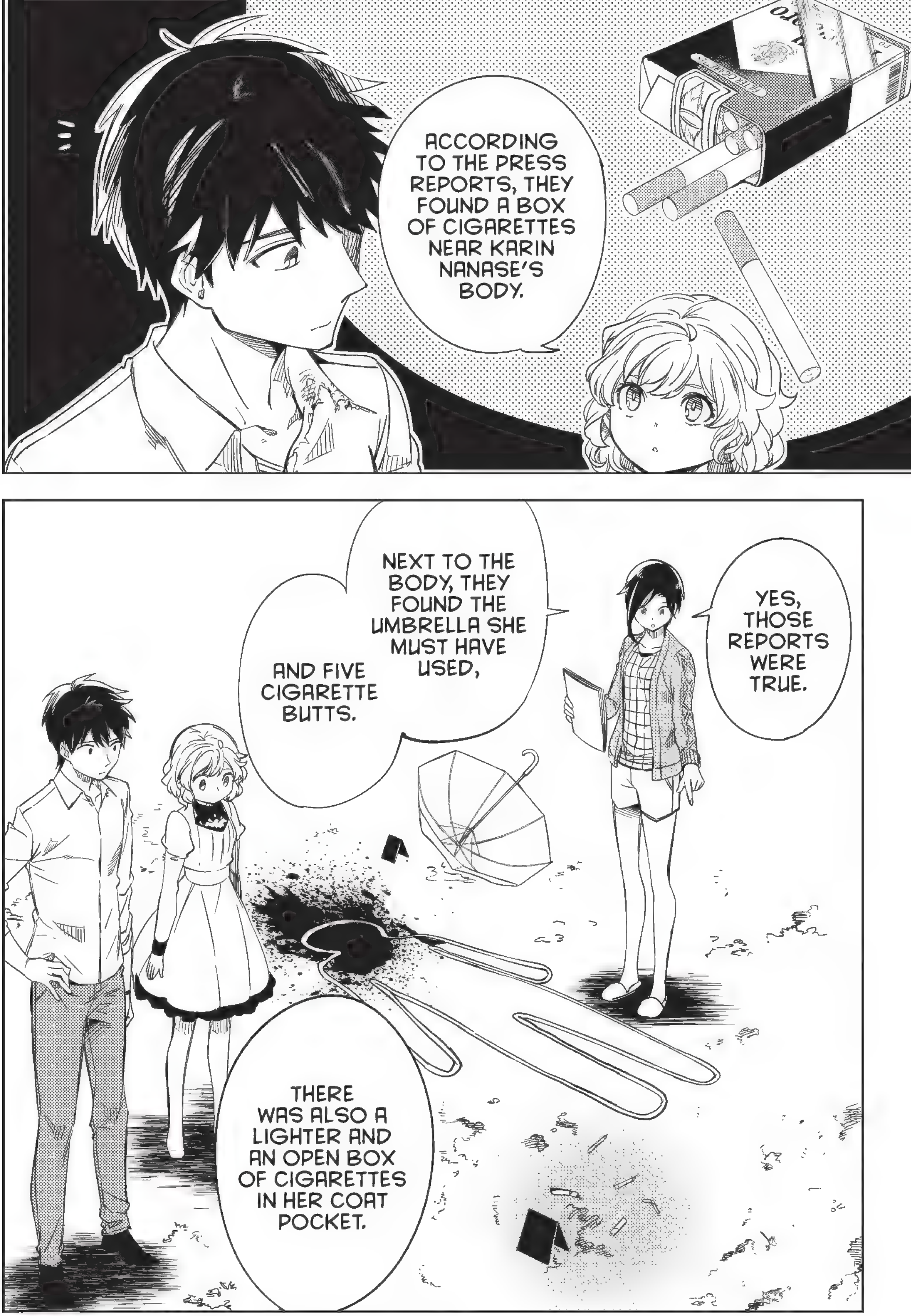

SO THE POLICE DON'T ACTUALLY HAVE TO STEP IN TO SOLVE THE CASE.
WE JUST NEED TO CHANGE THE STORY SO THAT EVERYTHING STILL ADDS UP IN THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN STEEL LADY NANASE, EVEN WITHOUT A GHOST. IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
YES.
IN FACT, WE *DON'T* WANT THE POLICE TO GET INVOLVED AND EXPOSE OUR EXPLANATION AS FALSE.
He had an alibi?
I TOLD you!
NOT GUILTY.
AND WE DON'T WANT TO ACCUSE SOMEBODY—THEY COULD GO ONTO THE INTERNET AND REFUTE OUR ARGUMENT, THUS DESTROYING OUR THEORY.
Damn it! I lost my job and my family!
HOTEL WORKER BLOG
I didn't do it!
THE SCENARIO YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, SAKI-SAN, IS ONE WE HAVE TO AVOID ANYWAY IF WE WANT TO BEAT THIS.
It WASN'T the hotel worker?

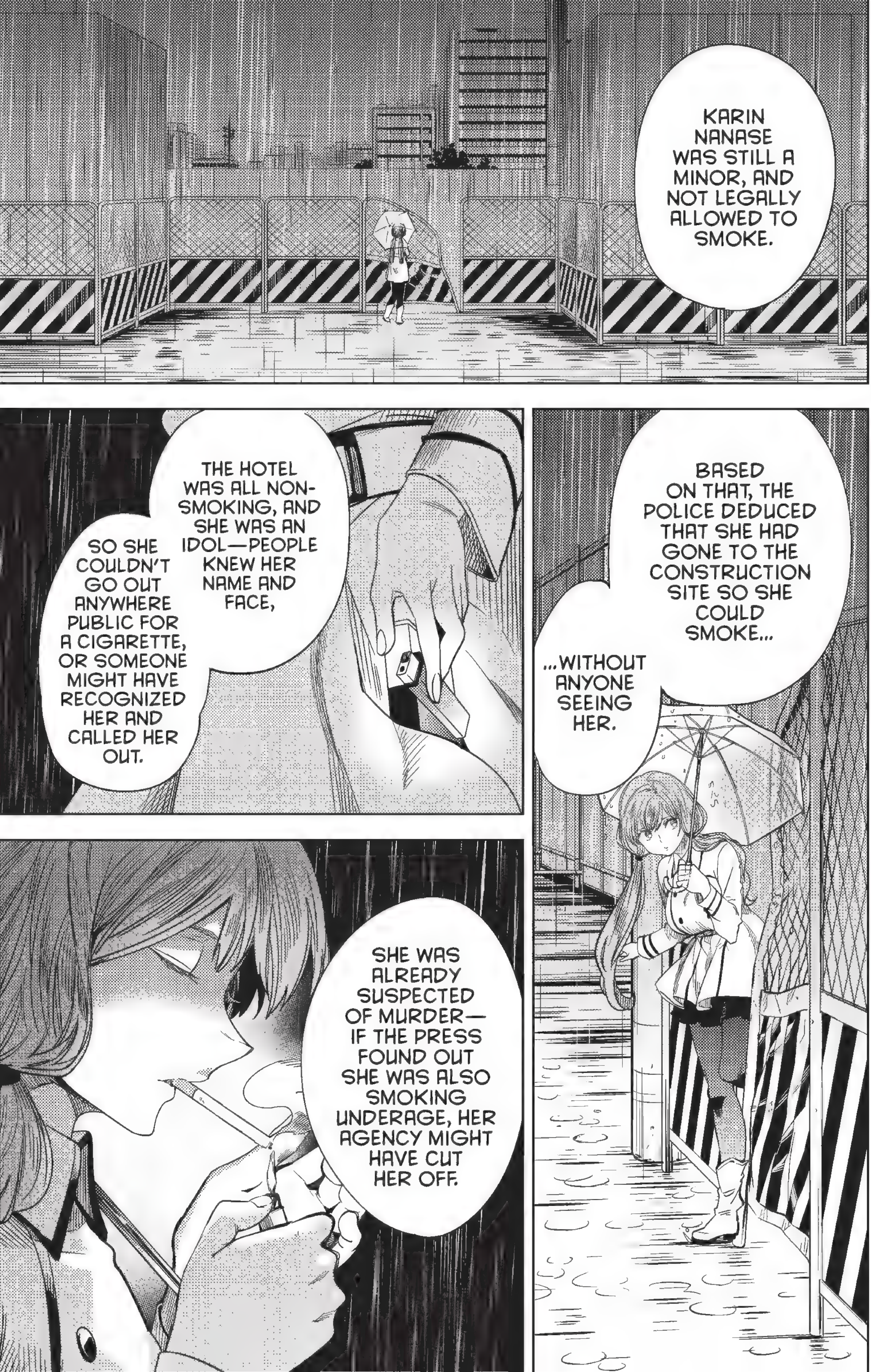

THAT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH.
Thanks.
COMPARED TO CREATING A FAKE SOLUTION THAT WOULD WITHSTAND POLICE INVESTIGATION AND A TRIAL, THIS SHOULD ACTUALLY BE PRETTY EASY.
AS LONG AS IT'S SOMETHING THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO BE TRUE,
THEN IT SHOULDN'T MATTER IF THERE ARE A FEW STRETCHES IN LOGIC, OR IF WE TAKE SOME ARTISTIC LICENSE.
FSH
WELL, I CAN'T TELL YOU EVERYTHING, BUT I'LL TELL YOU AS MUCH AS I CAN.

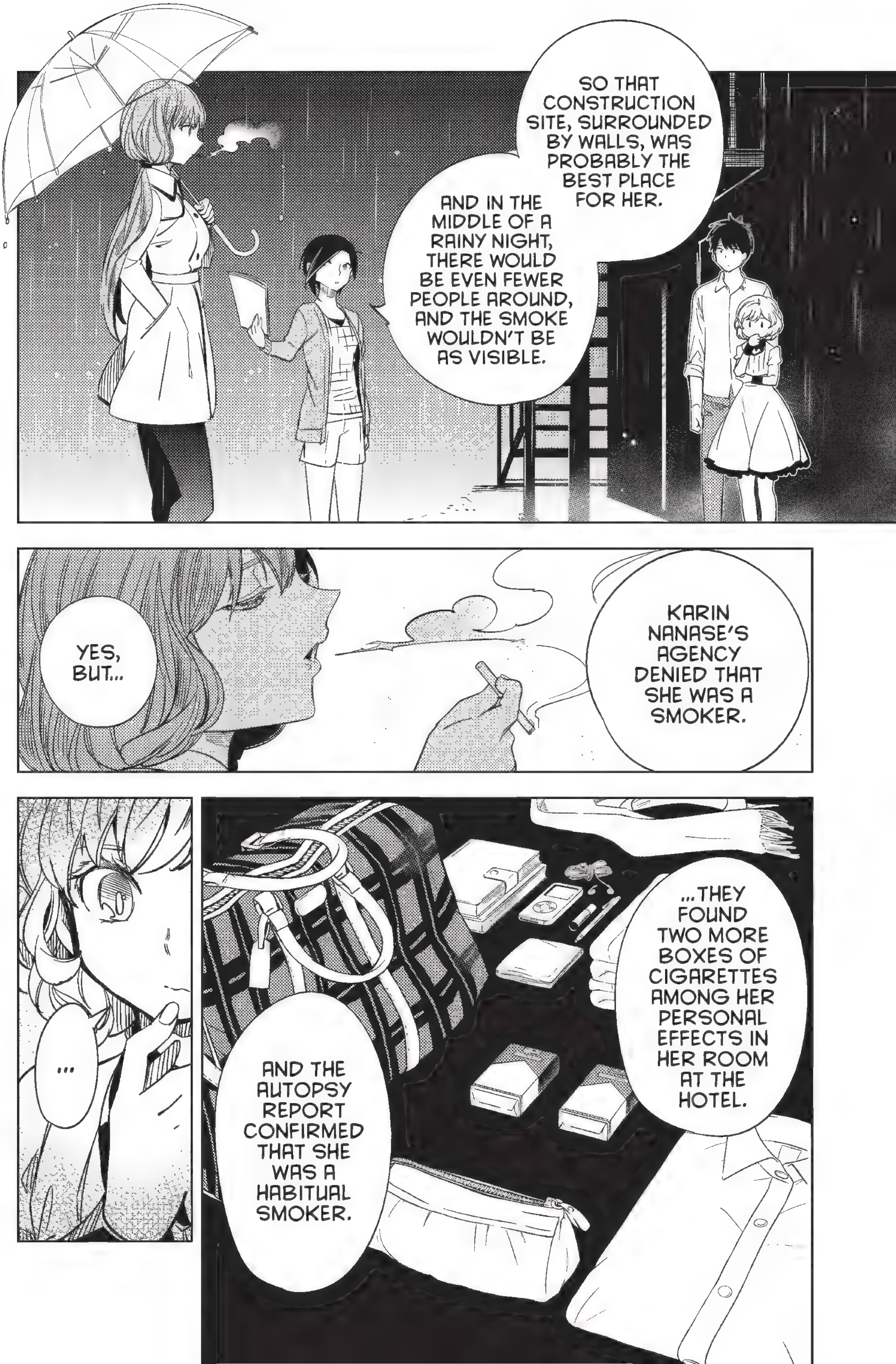

LET'S START BY REVIEWING THE BASIC POINTS, AND SORTING OUT THE POINTS THAT MIGHT RAISE QUESTIONS.
YOU'D SAVE YOURSELF A LOT OF TROUBLE IF YOU WOULD JUST LET ME LOOK AT THE FILE.
I CAN'T DO THAT.
SPARKLE
KARIN NANASE WAS HOUNDED BY THE MEDIA OVER ACCUSATIONS OF PATRICIDE, AND WAS HIDING OUT IN MAKURAZAKA.
HER BODY WAS FOUND AFTER EIGHT A.M. ON THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 30TH.

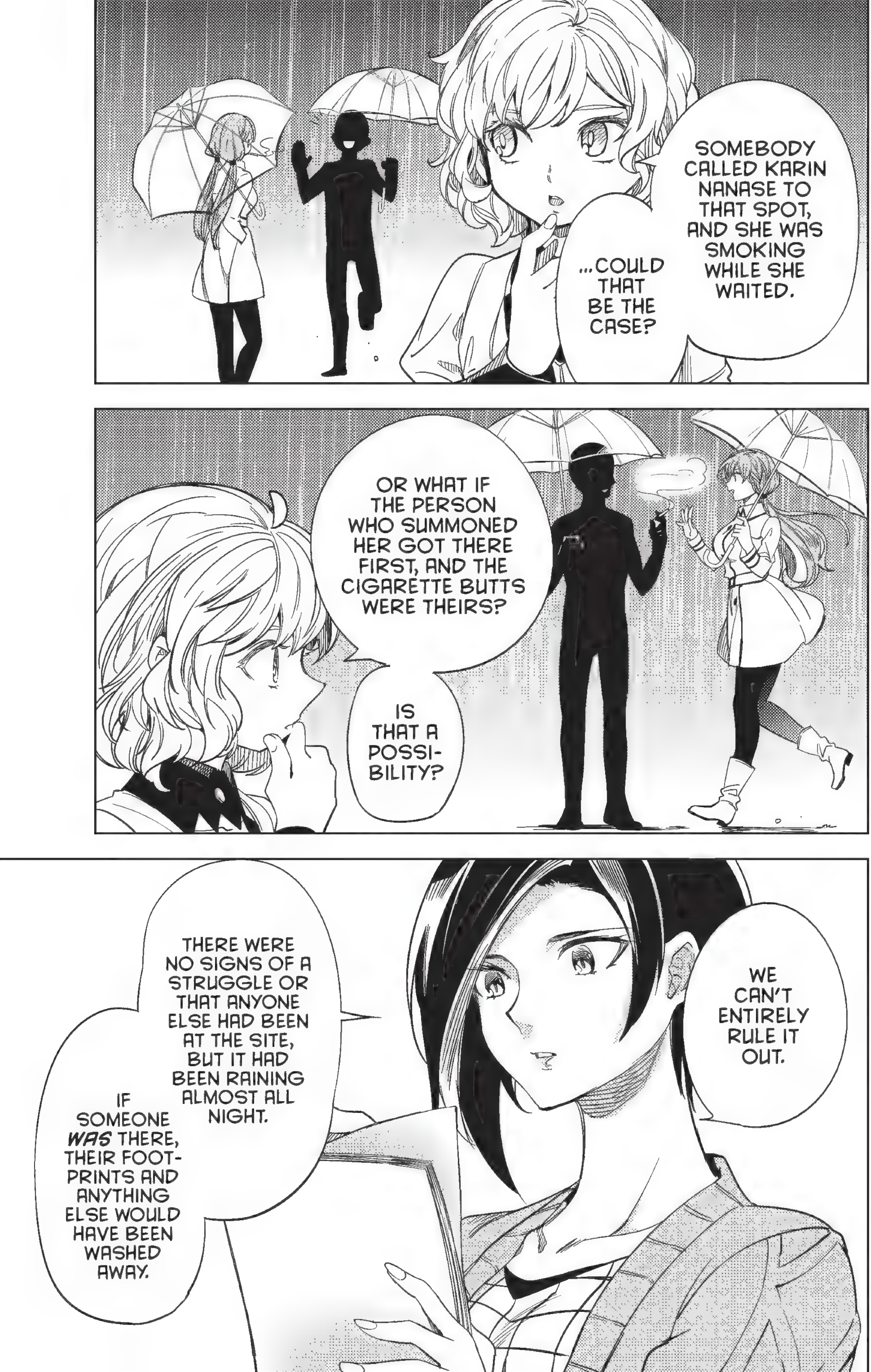

THE INVESTIGATORS' FIRST QUESTION WAS WHAT WAS KARIN NANASE DOING THERE TO BEGIN WITH?
THERE WERE STREET LIGHTS AROUND THE ABANDONED APARTMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE.
SO THERE WAS SOME DEGREE OF VISIBILITY AT NIGHT, EVEN WITH ALL THE WALLS AND FENCES AROUND IT.
IN FACT, NEIGHBORS COMPLAINED OF THE DANGER—IT MIGHT NOT BE DARK ENOUGH TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT.
BUT...

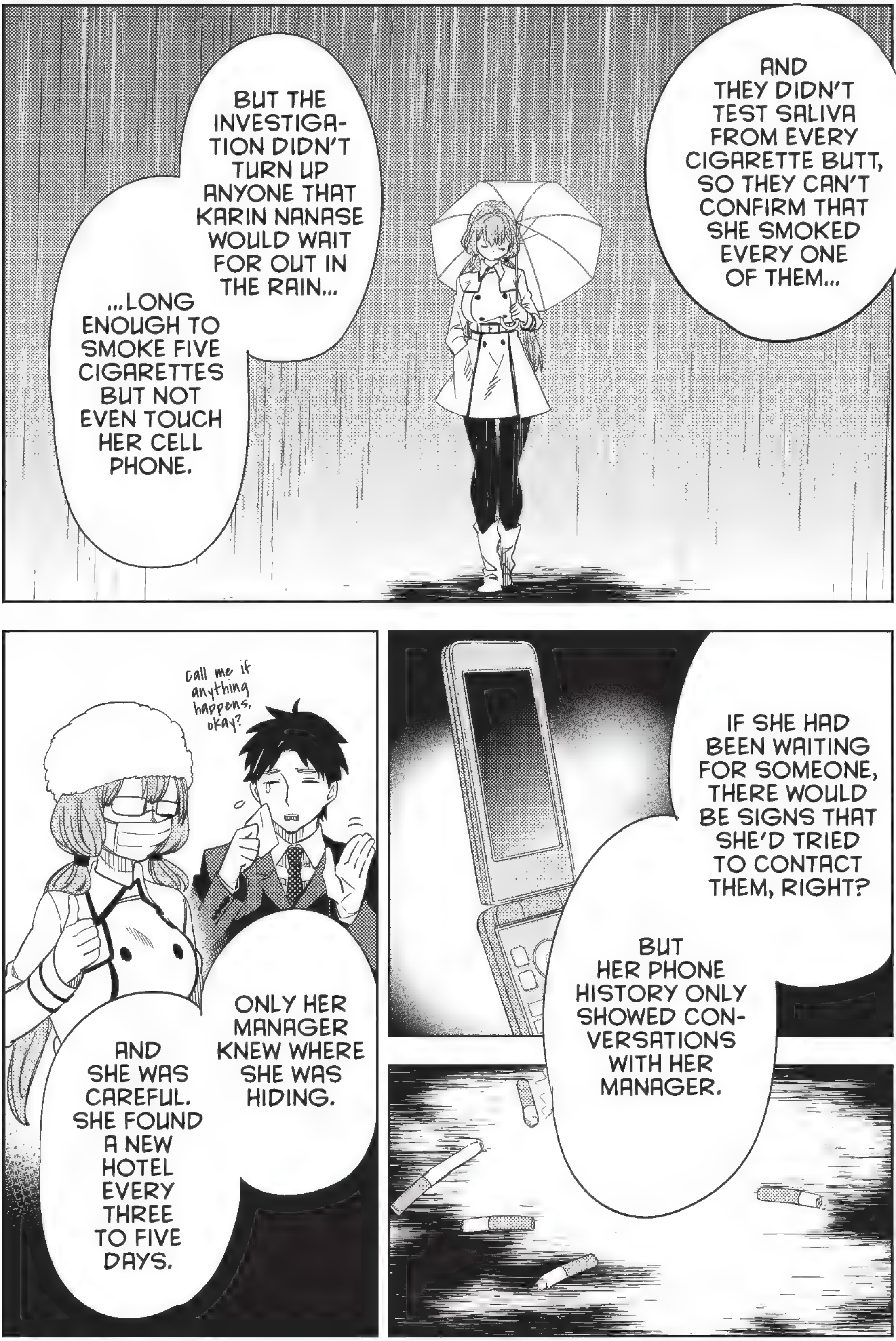

IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF PLACE YOU WOULD EXPECT A 19-YEAR-OLD GIRL TO WANDER INTO.
FURTHERMORE, THE DAY BEFORE HER BODY WAS FOUND—THE 29TH—IT HAD STARTED DRIZZLING SOME TIME AFTER NINE P.M.
AFTER MIDNIGHT, THE DRIZZLE TURNED INTO RAINFALL, AND THERE WAS ALMOST NO ONE IN THE AREA.
IT WAS UNUSUAL THAT SHE WOULD BE OUT AT THAT HOUR, AND ESPECIALLY IN THAT WEATHER.
LOOKING AT THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES SENSE IS THAT SOMEONE CALLED HER OUT THERE.
SO WOULDN'T MURDER BE THEIR FIRST GUESS?

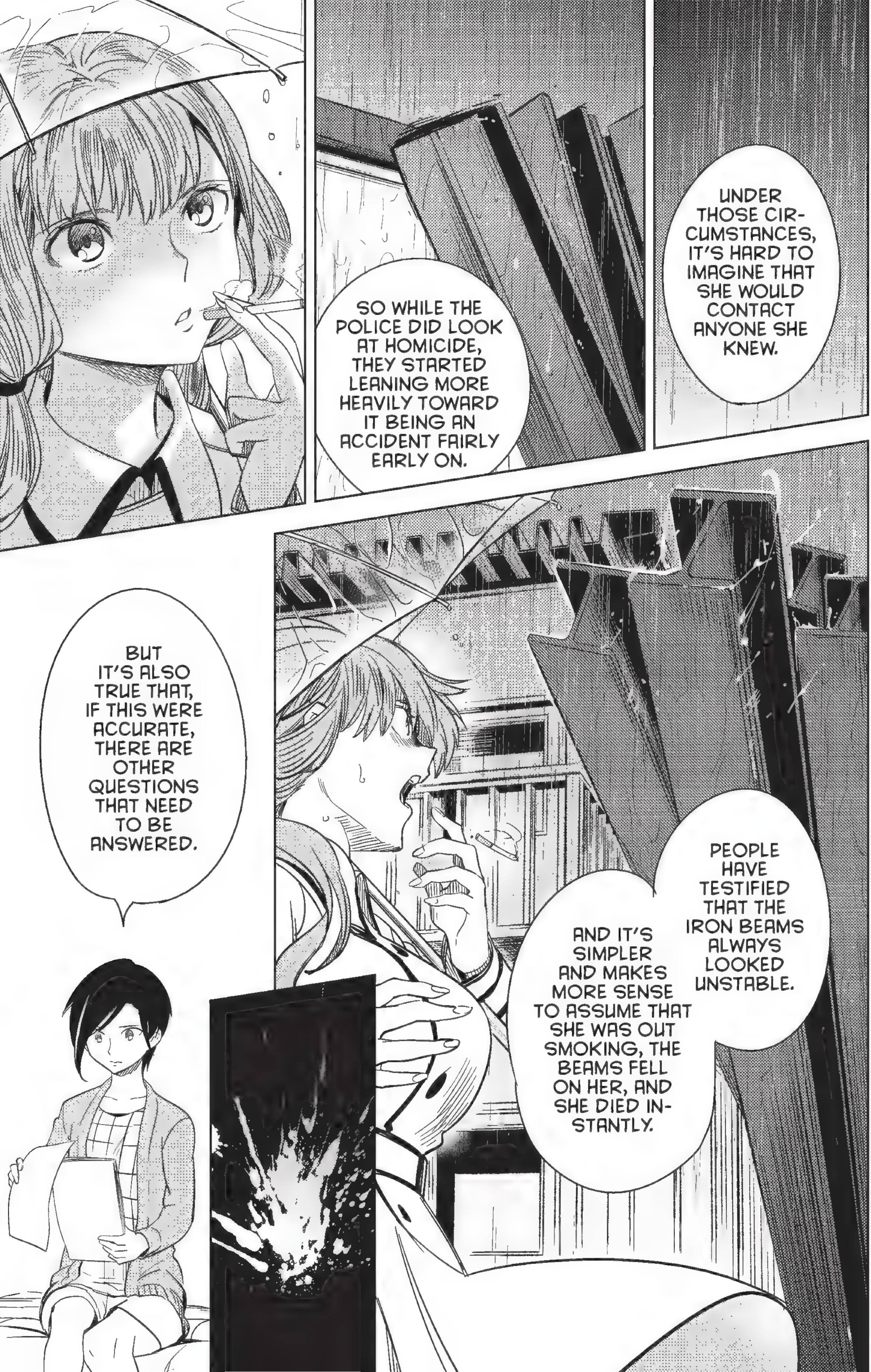

ACCORDING TO THE PRESS REPORTS, THEY FOUND A BOX OF CIGARETTES NEAR KARIN NANASE'S BODY.
YES, THOSE REPORTS WERE TRUE.
NEXT TO THE BODY, THEY FOUND THE UMBRELLA SHE MUST HAVE USED,
AND FIVE CIGARETTE BUTTS.
THERE WAS ALSO A LIGHTER AND AN OPEN BOX OF CIGARETTES IN HER COAT POCKET.

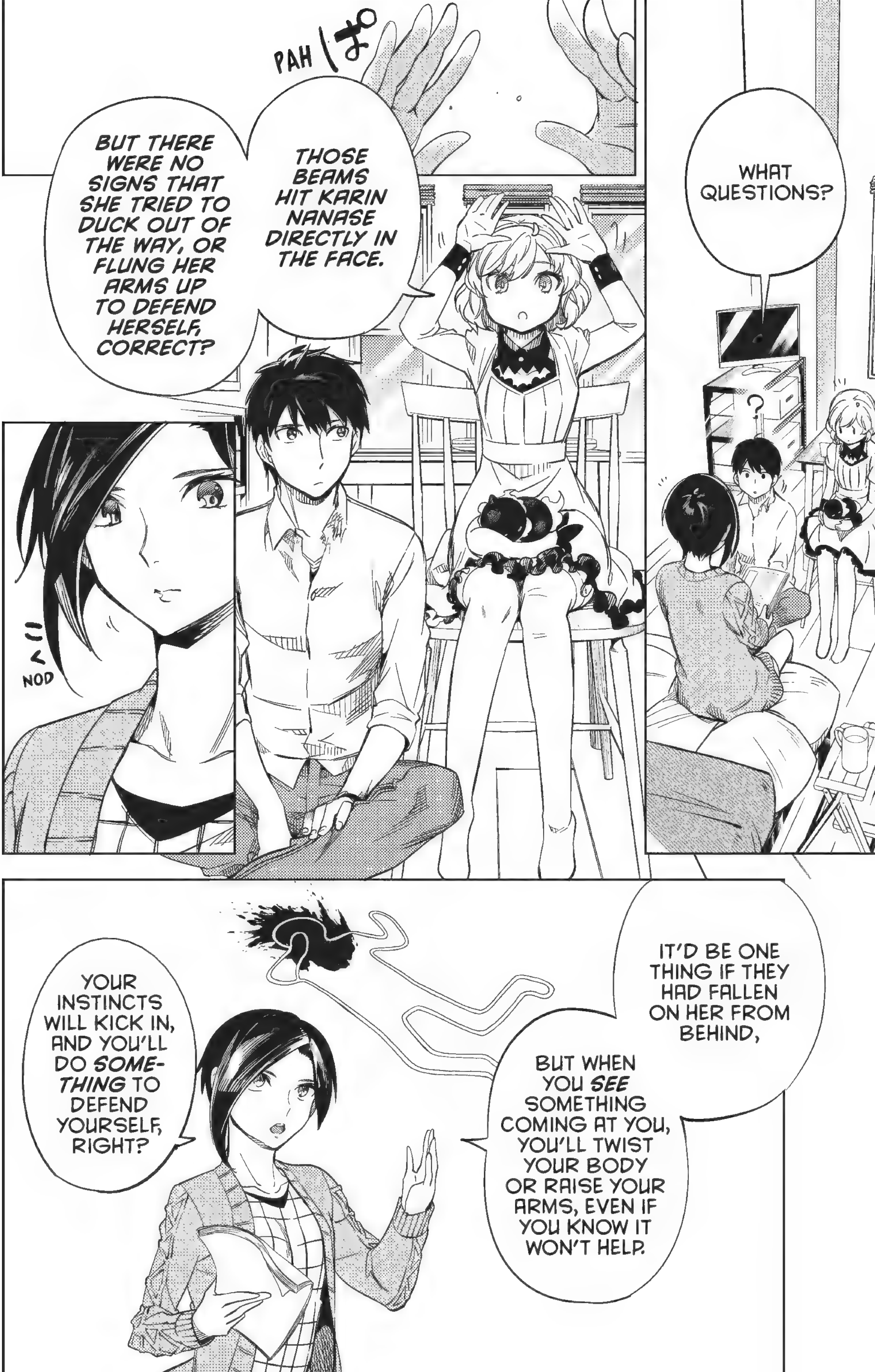

KARIN NANASE WAS STILL A MINOR, AND NOT LEGALLY ALLOWED TO SMOKE.
BASED ON THAT, THE POLICE DEDUCED THAT SHE HAD GONE TO THE CONSTRUCTION SITE SO SHE COULD SMOKE...
...WITHOUT ANYONE SEEING HER.
THE HOTEL WAS ALL NON-SMOKING, AND SHE WAS AN IDOL—PEOPLE KNEW HER NAME AND FACE,
SO SHE COULDN'T GO OUT ANYWHERE PUBLIC FOR A CIGARETTE, OR SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE RECOGNIZED HER AND CALLED HER OUT.
SHE WAS ALREADY SUSPECTED OF MURDER—IF THE PRESS FOUND OUT SHE WAS ALSO SMOKING UNDERAGE, HER AGENCY MIGHT HAVE CUT HER OFF.

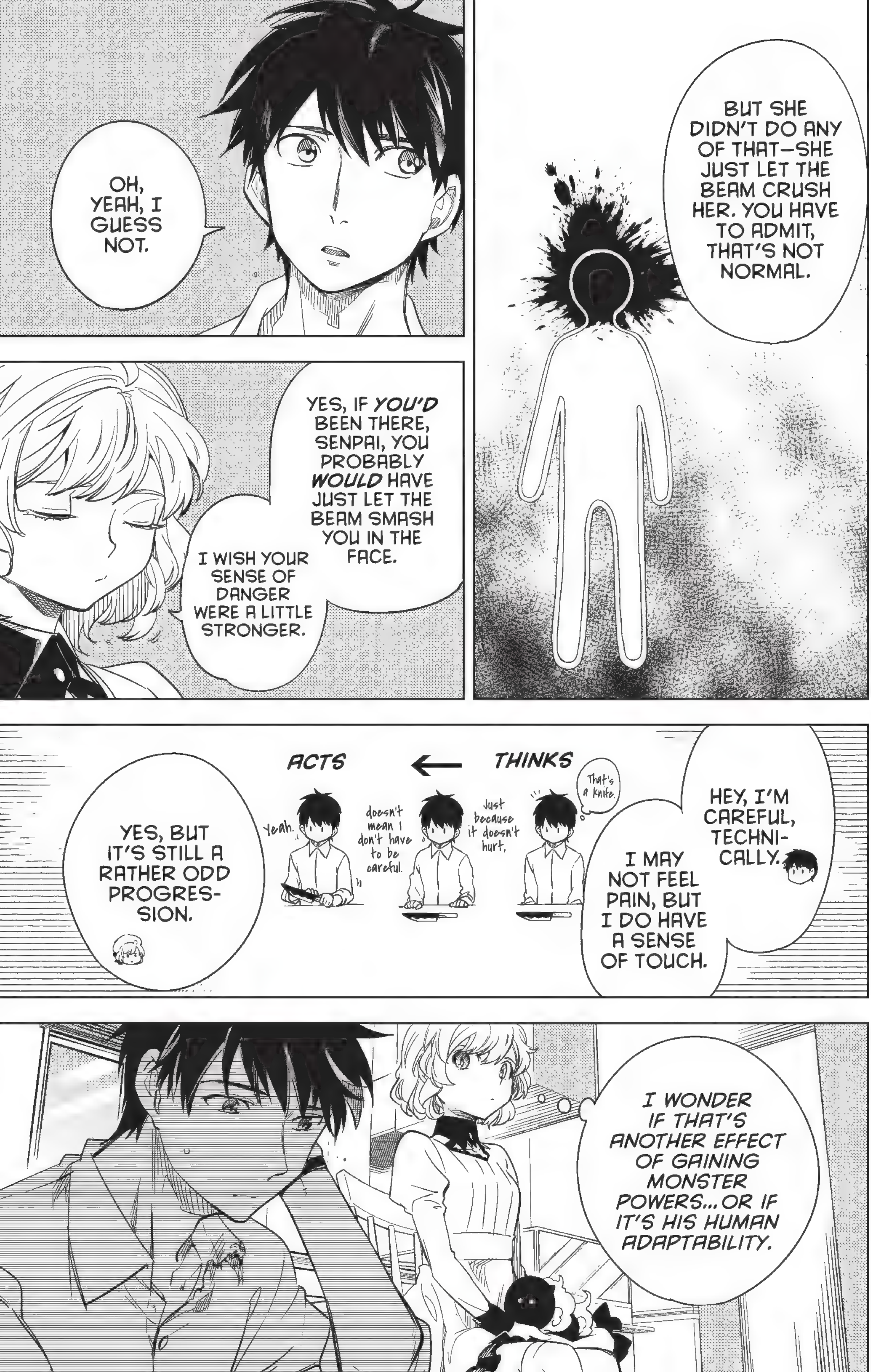

SO THAT CONSTRUCTION SITE, SURROUNDED BY WALLS, WAS PROBABLY THE BEST PLACE FOR HER.
AND IN THE MIDDLE OF A RAINY NIGHT, THERE WOULD BE EVEN FEWER PEOPLE AROUND, AND THE SMOKE WOULDN'T BE AS VISIBLE.
KARIN NANASE'S AGENCY DENIED THAT SHE WAS A SMOKER.
YES, BUT...
...THEY FOUND TWO MORE BOXES OF CIGARETTES AMONG HER PERSONAL EFFECTS IN HER ROOM AT THE HOTEL.
AND THE AUTOPSY REPORT CONFIRMED THAT SHE WAS A HABITUAL SMOKER.
...

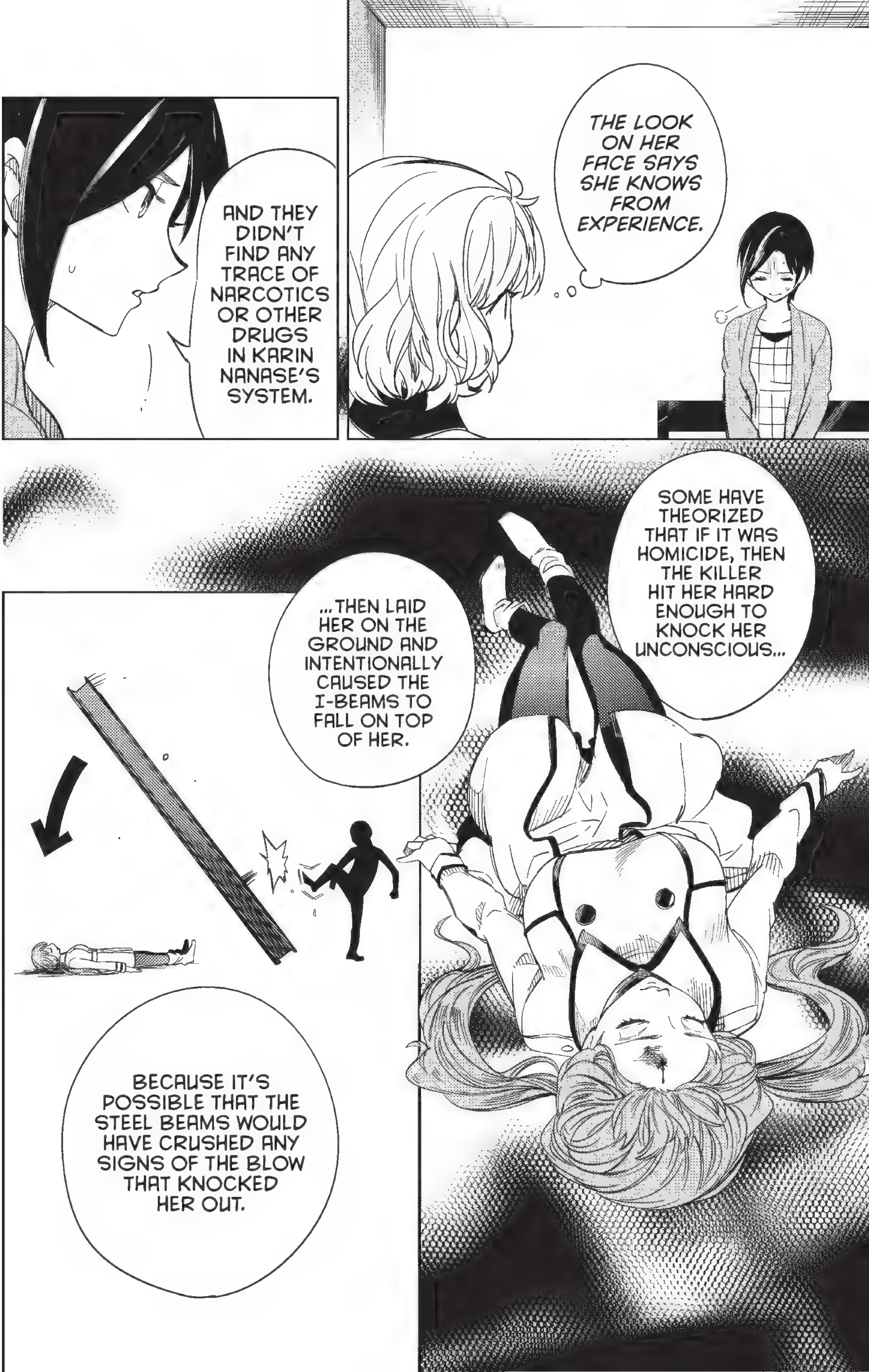

SOMEBODY CALLED KARIN NANASE TO THAT SPOT, AND SHE WAS SMOKING WHILE SHE WAITED.
...COULD THAT BE THE CASE?
OR WHAT IF THE PERSON WHO SUMMONED HER GOT THERE FIRST, AND THE CIGARETTE BUTTS WERE THEIRS?
IS THAT A POSSIBILITY?
WE CAN'T ENTIRELY RULE IT OUT.
THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE OR THAT ANYONE ELSE HAD BEEN AT THE SITE, BUT IT HAD BEEN RAINING ALMOST ALL NIGHT.
IF SOMEONE *WAS* THERE, THEIR FOOTPRINTS AND ANYTHING ELSE WOULD HAVE BEEN WASHED AWAY.

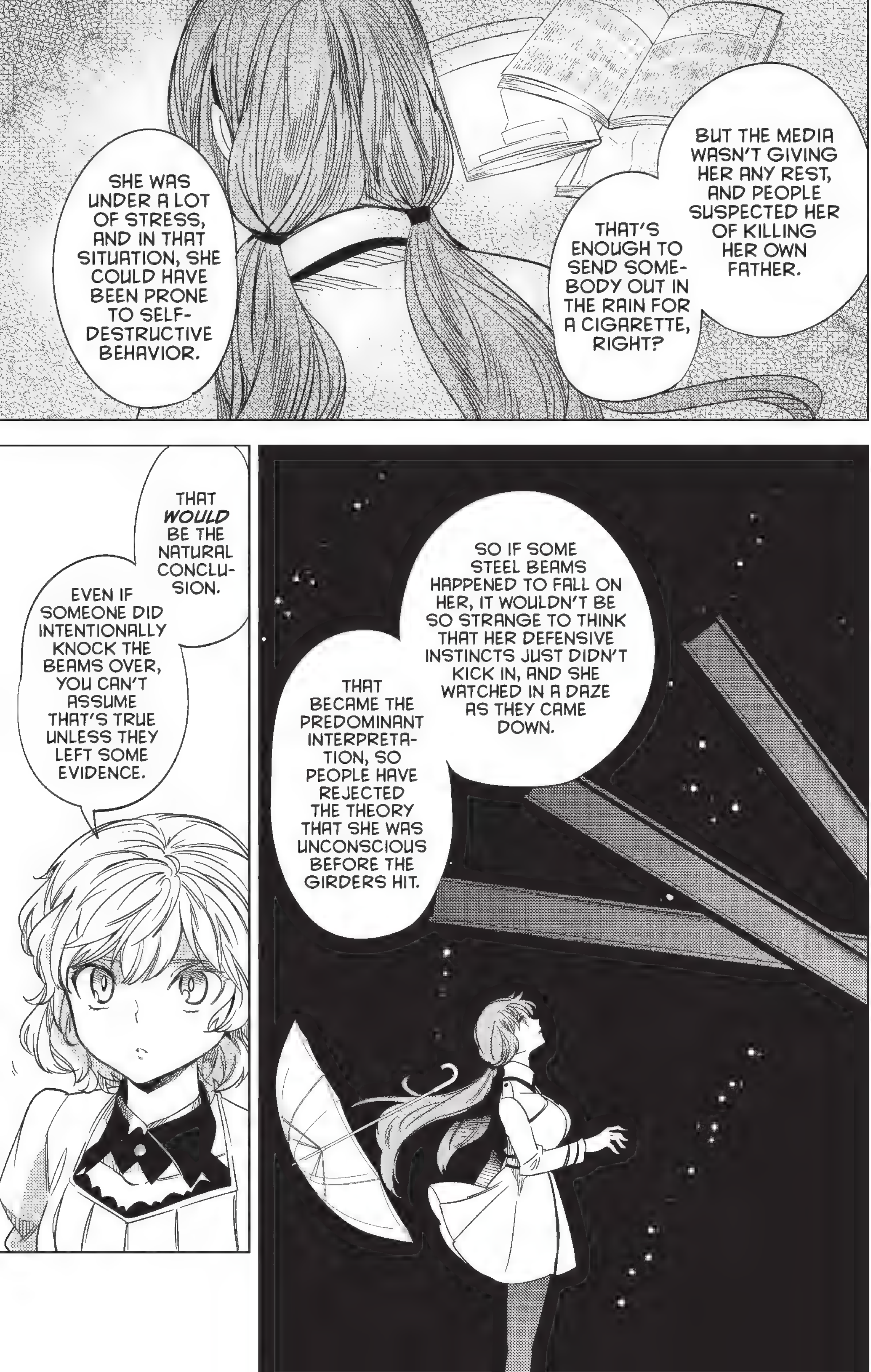

AND THEY DIDN'T TEST SALIVA FROM EVERY CIGARETTE BUTT, SO THEY CAN'T CONFIRM THAT SHE SMOKED EVERY ONE OF THEM...
BUT THE INVESTIGATION DIDN'T TURN UP ANYONE THAT KARIN NANASE WOULD WAIT FOR OUT IN THE RAIN...
...LONG ENOUGH TO SMOKE FIVE CIGARETTES BUT NOT EVEN TOUCH HER CELL PHONE.
IF SHE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR SOMEONE, THERE WOULD BE SIGNS THAT SHE'D TRIED TO CONTACT THEM, RIGHT?
BUT HER PHONE HISTORY ONLY SHOWED CONVERSATIONS WITH HER MANAGER.
Call me if anything happens, okay?
ONLY HER MANAGER KNEW WHERE SHE WAS HIDING.
AND SHE WAS CAREFUL. SHE FOUND A NEW HOTEL EVERY THREE TO FIVE DAYS.

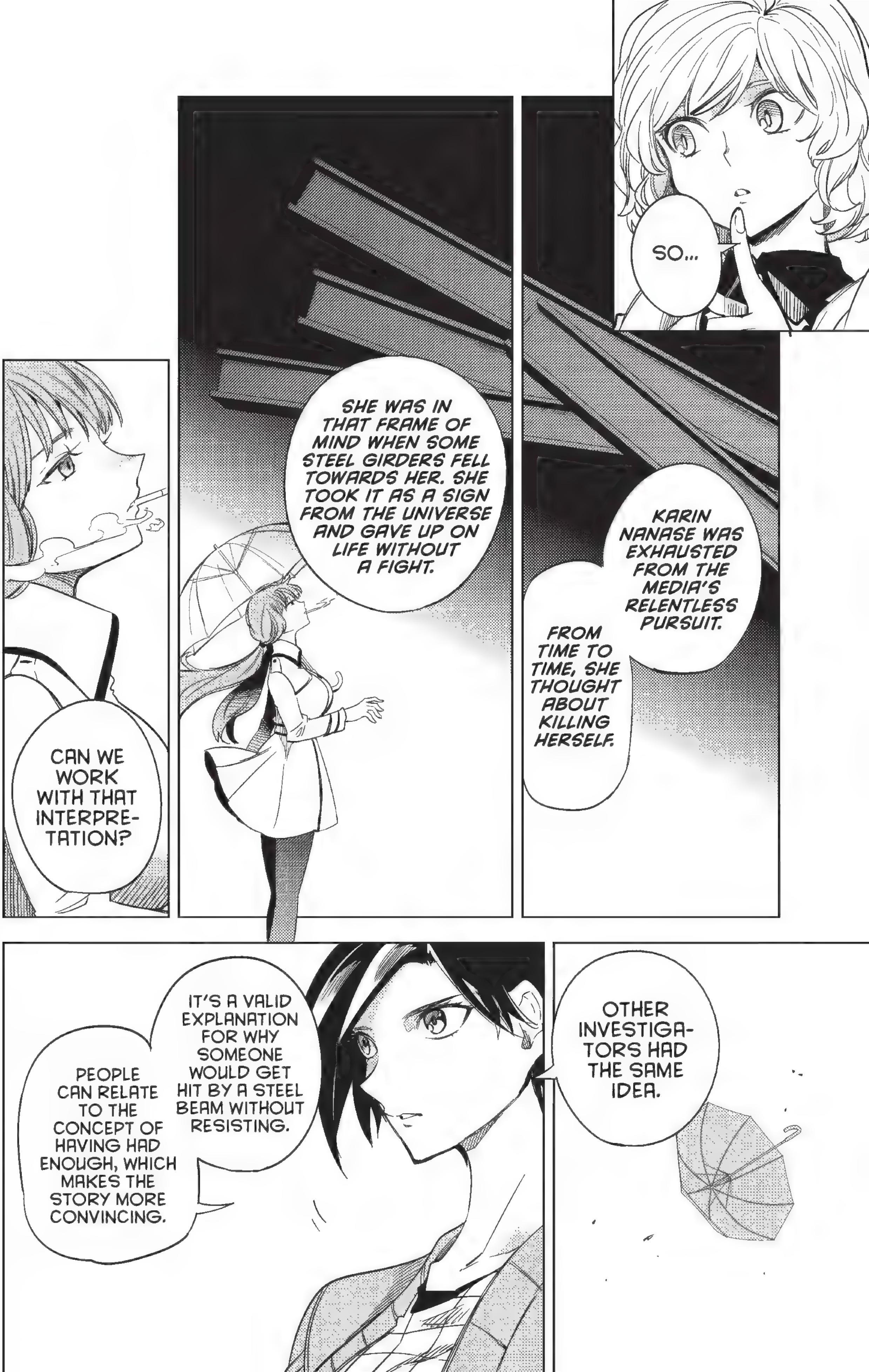

UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT SHE WOULD CONTACT ANYONE SHE KNEW.
SO WHILE THE POLICE DID LOOK AT HOMICIDE, THEY STARTED LEANING MORE HEAVILY TOWARD IT BEING AN ACCIDENT FAIRLY EARLY ON.
PEOPLE HAVE TESTIFIED THAT THE IRON BEAMS ALWAYS LOOKED UNSTABLE.
AND IT'S SIMPLER AND MAKES MORE SENSE TO ASSUME THAT SHE WAS OUT SMOKING, THE BEAMS FELL ON HER, AND SHE DIED INSTANTLY.
BUT IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT, IF THIS WERE ACCURATE, THERE ARE OTHER QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ANSWERED.

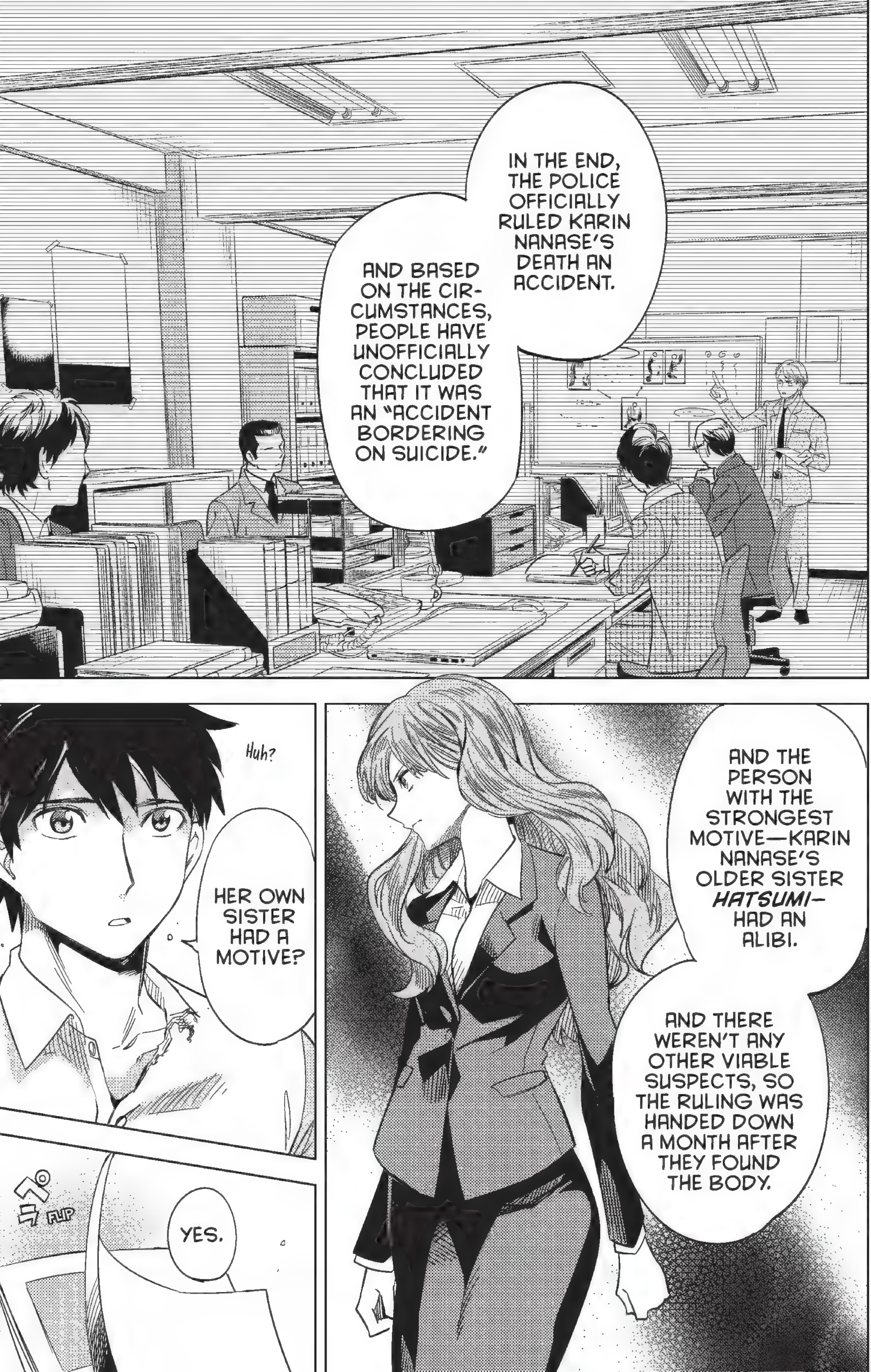

WHAT QUESTIONS?
PAH ぽ
THOSE BEAMS HIT KARIN NANASE DIRECTLY IN THE FACE.
BUT THERE WERE NO SIGNS THAT SHE TRIED TO DUCK OUT OF THE WAY, OR FLUNG HER ARMS UP TO DEFEND HERSELF, CORRECT?
こく NOD
IT'D BE ONE THING IF THEY HAD FALLEN ON HER FROM BEHIND,
BUT WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING COMING AT YOU, YOU'LL TWIST YOUR BODY OR RAISE YOUR ARMS, EVEN IF YOU KNOW IT WON'T HELP.
YOUR INSTINCTS WILL KICK IN, AND YOU'LL DO SOMETHING TO DEFEND YOURSELF, RIGHT?

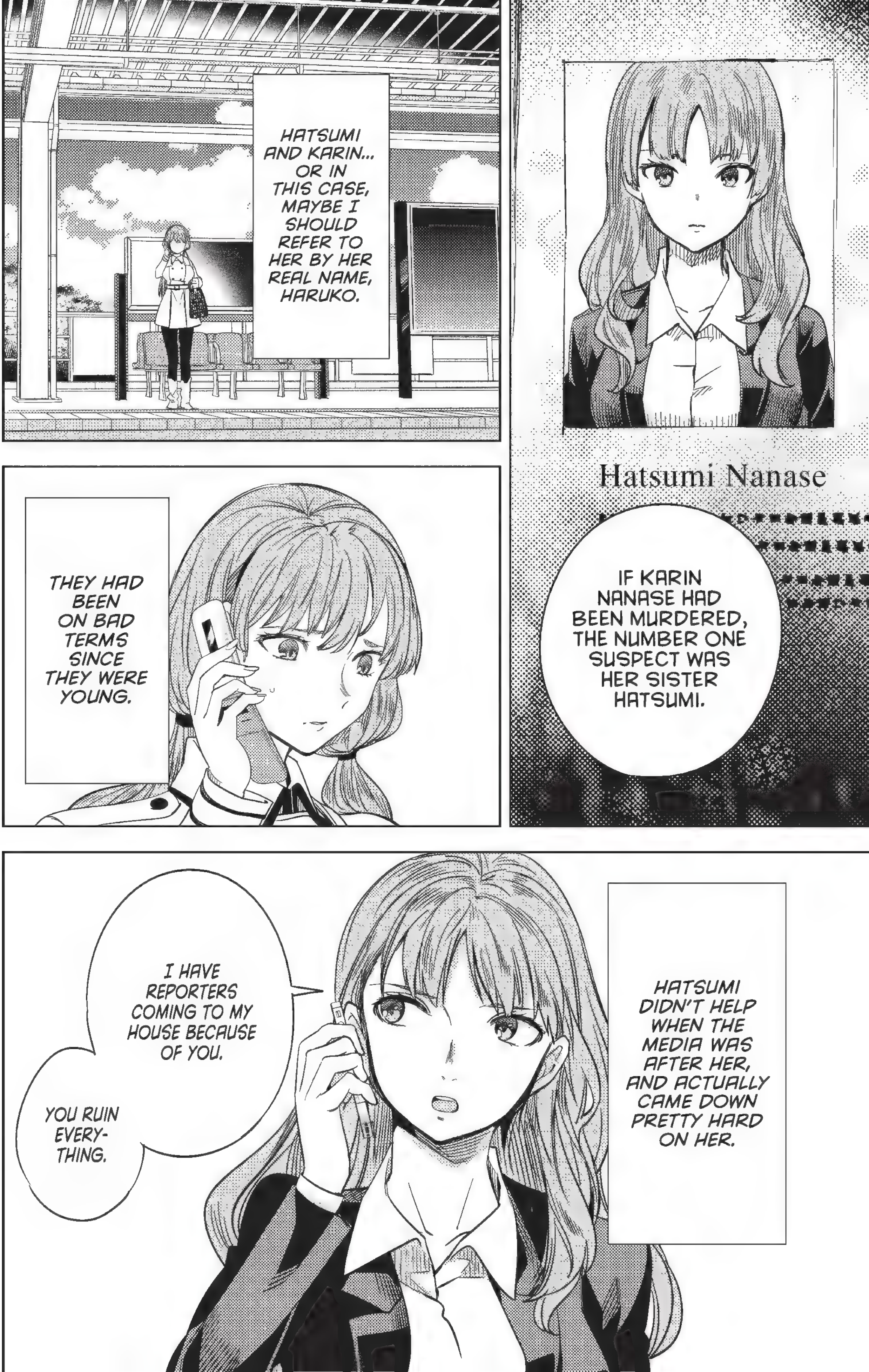

BUT SHE DIDN'T DO ANY OF THAT—SHE JUST LET THE BEAM CRUSH HER. YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, THAT'S NOT NORMAL.
OH, YEAH, I GUESS NOT.
YES, IF *YOU'D* BEEN THERE, SENPAI, YOU PROBABLY ***WOULD*** HAVE JUST LET THE BEAM SMASH YOU IN THE FACE.
I WISH YOUR SENSE OF DANGER WERE A LITTLE STRONGER.
HEY, I'M CAREFUL, TECHNICALLY.
I MAY NOT FEEL PAIN, BUT I DO HAVE A SENSE OF TOUCH.
THINKS
←
ACTS
That's a knife.
Just because it doesn't hurt,
doesn't mean I don't have to be careful.
Yeah.
YES, BUT IT'S STILL A RATHER ODD PROGRESSION.
I WONDER IF THAT'S ANOTHER EFFECT OF GAINING MONSTER POWERS...OR IF IT'S HIS HUMAN ADAPTABILITY.

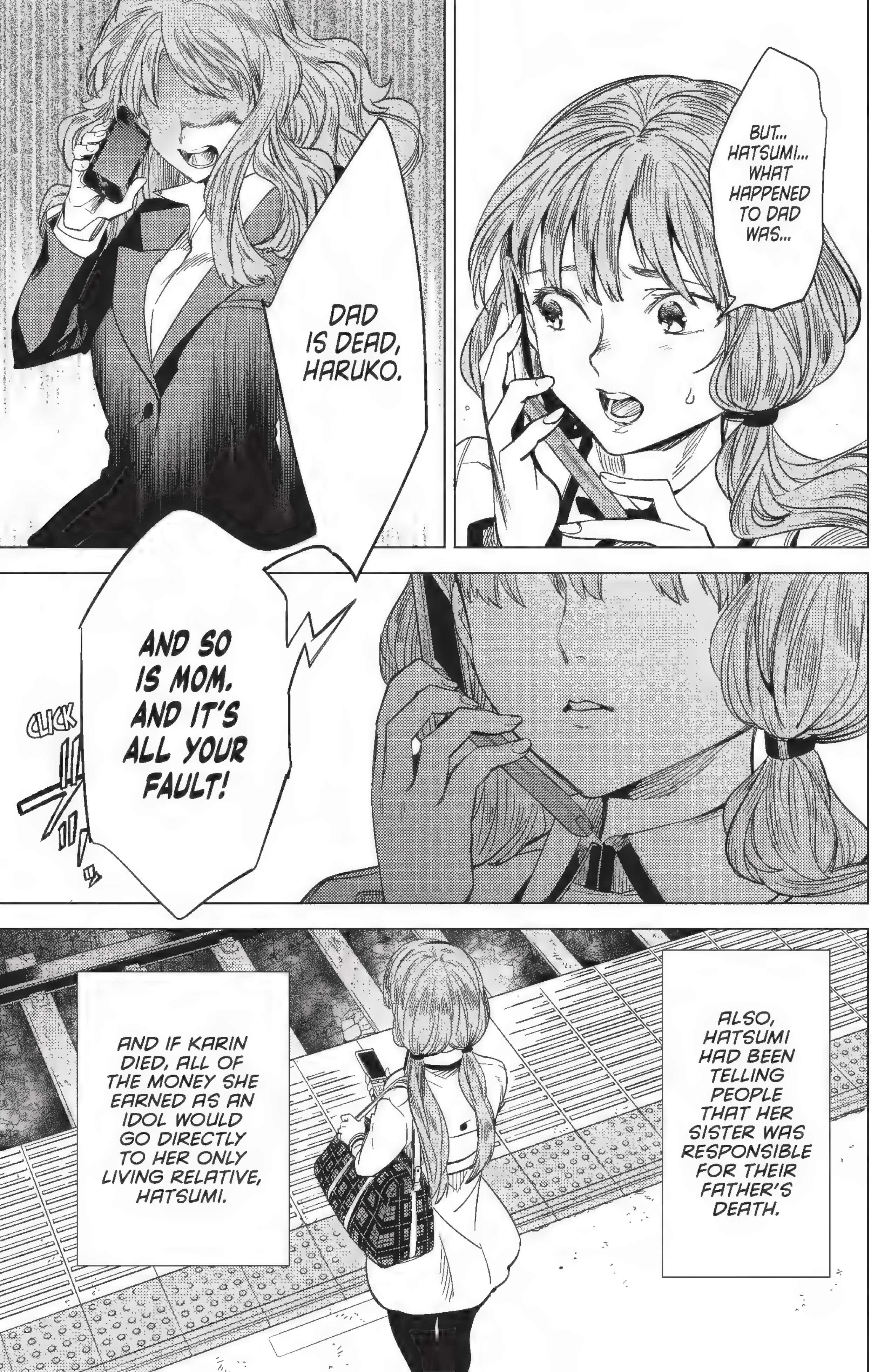

THE LOOK ON HER FACE SAYS SHE KNOWS FROM EXPERIENCE.
AND THEY DIDN'T FIND ANY TRACE OF NARCOTICS OR OTHER DRUGS IN KARIN NANASE'S SYSTEM.
SOME HAVE THEORIZED THAT IF IT WAS HOMICIDE, THEN THE KILLER HIT HER HARD ENOUGH TO KNOCK HER UNCONSCIOUS...
...THEN LAID HER ON THE GROUND AND INTENTIONALLY CAUSED THE I-BEAMS TO FALL ON TOP OF HER.
BECAUSE IT'S POSSIBLE THAT THE STEEL BEAMS WOULD HAVE CRUSHED ANY SIGNS OF THE BLOW THAT KNOCKED HER OUT.

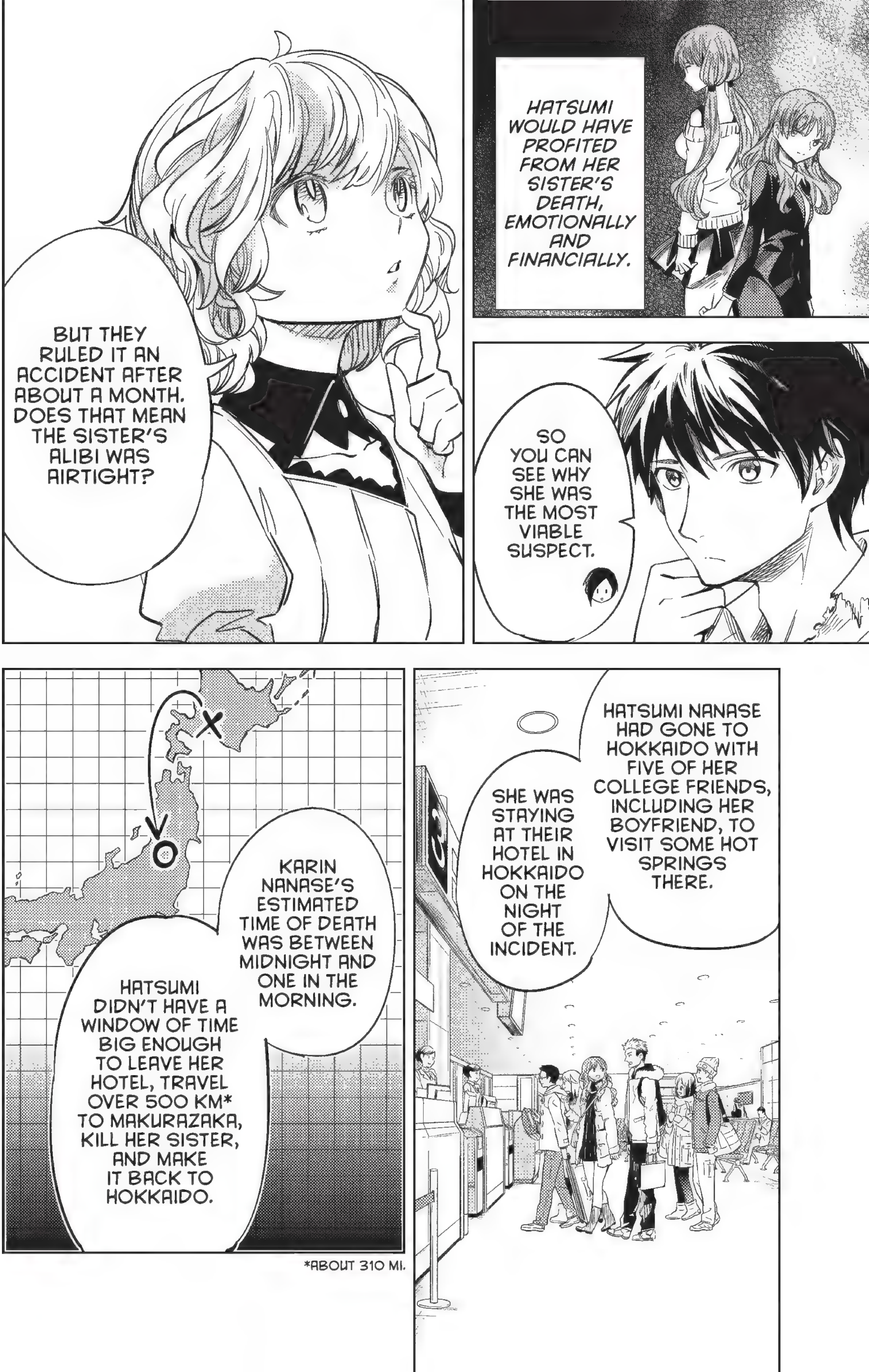

BUT THE MEDIA WASN'T GIVING HER ANY REST, AND PEOPLE SUSPECTED HER OF KILLING HER OWN FATHER.
THAT'S ENOUGH TO SEND SOMEBODY OUT IN THE RAIN FOR A CIGARETTE, RIGHT?
SHE WAS UNDER A LOT OF STRESS, AND IN THAT SITUATION, SHE COULD HAVE BEEN PRONE TO SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR.
SO IF SOME STEEL BEAMS HAPPENED TO FALL ON HER, IT WOULDN'T BE SO STRANGE TO THINK THAT HER DEFENSIVE INSTINCTS JUST DIDN'T KICK IN, AND SHE WATCHED IN A DAZE AS THEY CAME DOWN.
THAT BECAME THE PREDOMINANT INTERPRETATION, SO PEOPLE HAVE REJECTED THE THEORY THAT SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUS BEFORE THE GIRDERS HIT.
THAT *WOULD* BE THE NATURAL CONCLUSION.
EVEN IF SOMEONE DID INTENTIONALLY KNOCK THE BEAMS OVER, YOU CAN'T ASSUME THAT'S TRUE UNLESS THEY LEFT SOME EVIDENCE.


SO...
KARIN NANASE WAS EXHAUSTED FROM THE MEDIA'S RELENTLESS PURSUIT.
FROM TIME TO TIME, SHE THOUGHT ABOUT KILLING HERSELF.
SHE WAS IN THAT FRAME OF MIND WHEN SOME STEEL GIRDERS FELL TOWARDS HER. SHE TOOK IT AS A SIGN FROM THE UNIVERSE AND GAVE UP ON LIFE WITHOUT A FIGHT.
CAN WE WORK WITH THAT INTERPRETATION?
OTHER INVESTIGATORS HAD THE SAME IDEA.
IT'S A VALID EXPLANATION FOR WHY SOMEONE WOULD GET HIT BY A STEEL BEAM WITHOUT RESISTING.
PEOPLE CAN RELATE TO THE CONCEPT OF HAVING HAD ENOUGH, WHICH MAKES THE STORY MORE CONVINCING.

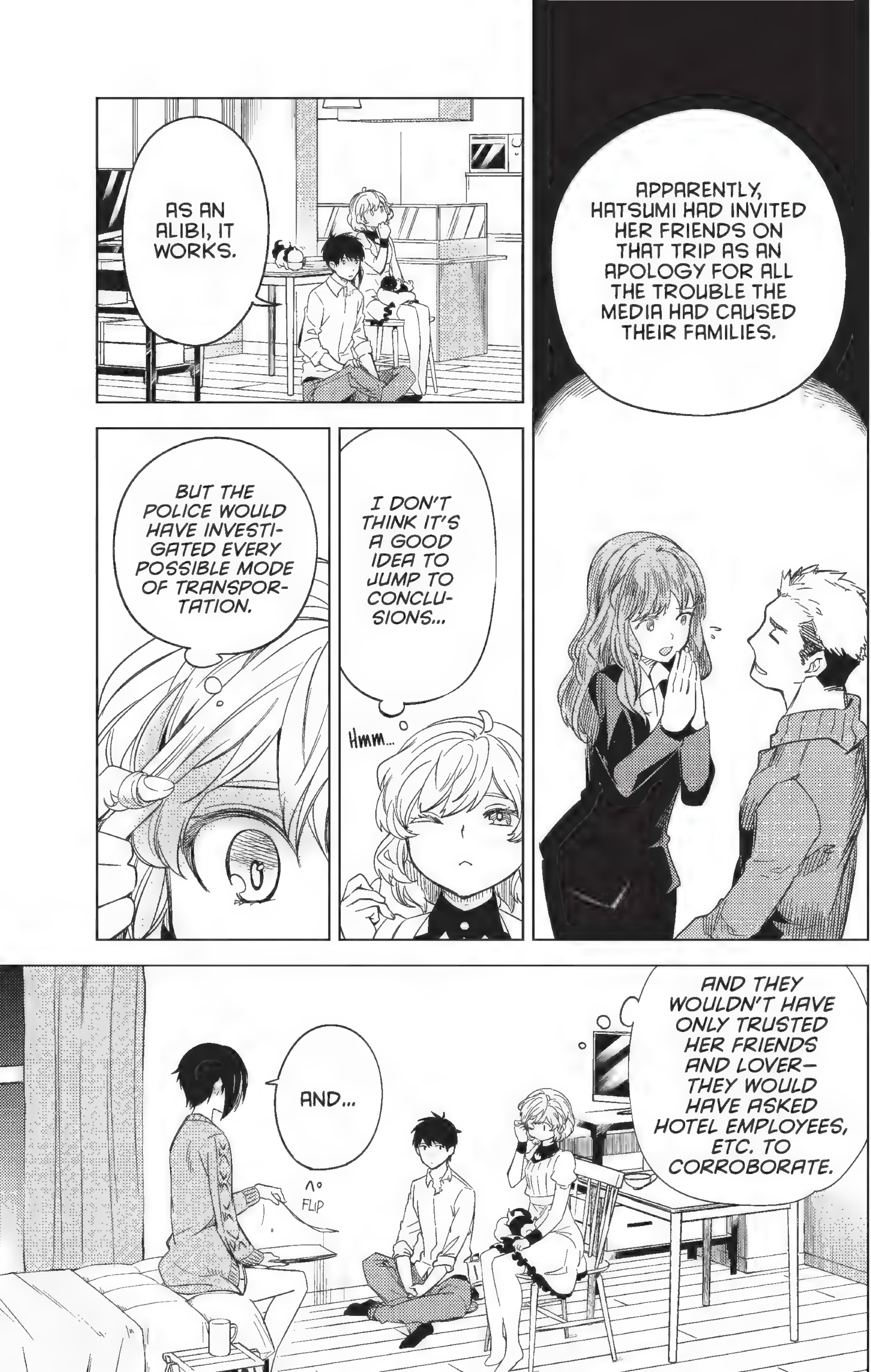

IN THE END, THE POLICE OFFICIALLY RULED KARIN NANASE'S DEATH AN ACCIDENT.
AND BASED ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES, PEOPLE HAVE UNOFFICIALLY CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS AN "ACCIDENT BORDERING ON SUICIDE."
AND THE PERSON WITH THE STRONGEST MOTIVE—KARIN NANASE'S OLDER SISTER *HATSUMI*—HAD AN ALIBI.
AND THERE WEREN'T ANY OTHER VIABLE SUSPECTS, SO THE RULING WAS HANDED DOWN A MONTH AFTER THEY FOUND THE BODY.
Huh?
HER OWN SISTER HAD A MOTIVE?
ペラ
FLIP
YES.

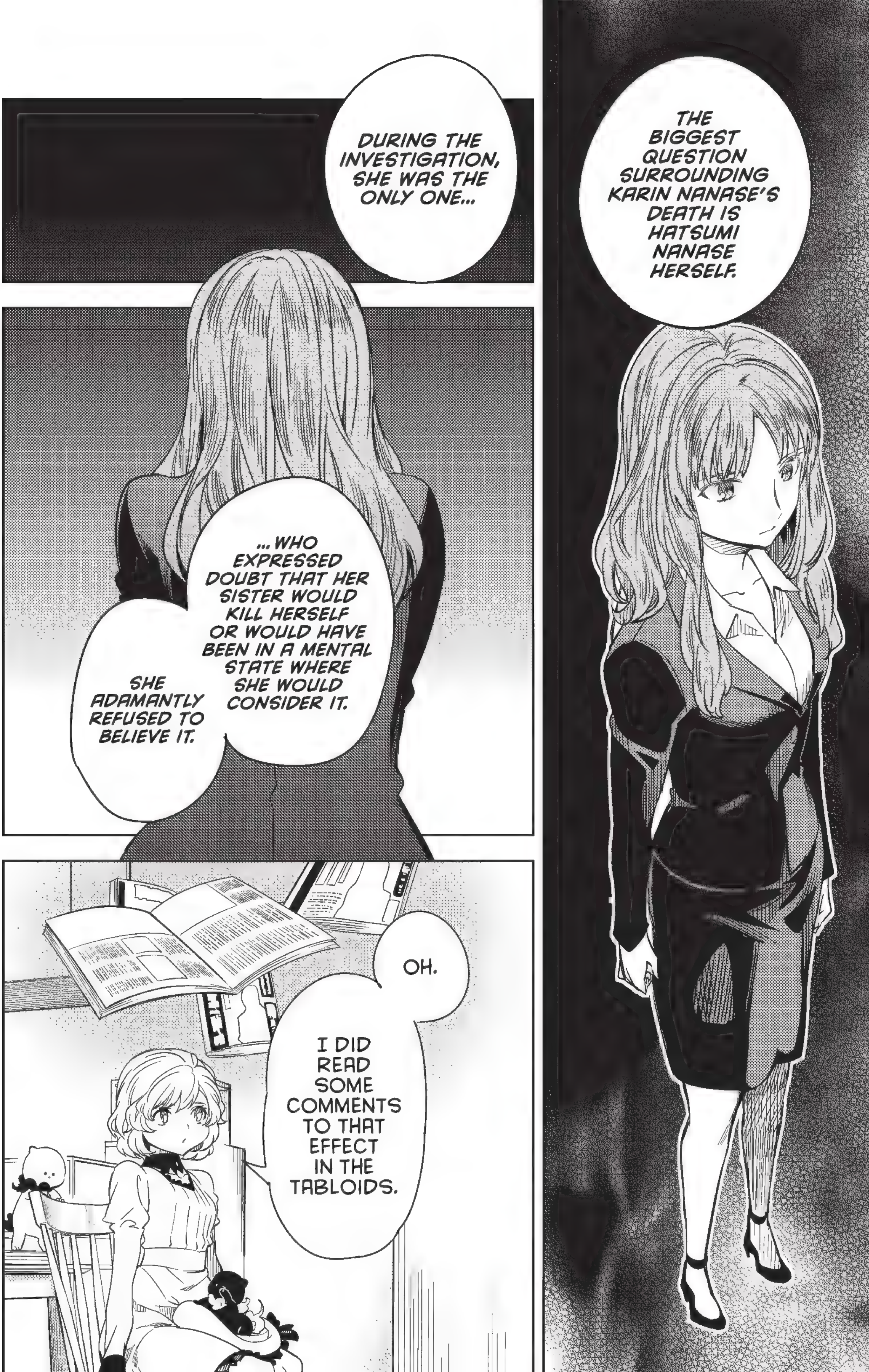

Hatsumi Nanase
IF KARIN NANASE HAD BEEN MURDERED, THE NUMBER ONE SUSPECT WAS HER SISTER HATSUMI.
HATSUMI AND KARIN... OR IN THIS CASE, MAYBE I SHOULD REFER TO HER BY HER REAL NAME, HARUKO.
THEY HAD BEEN ON BAD TERMS SINCE THEY WERE YOUNG.
HATSUMI DIDN'T HELP WHEN THE MEDIA WAS AFTER HER, AND ACTUALLY CAME DOWN PRETTY HARD ON HER.
I HAVE REPORTERS COMING TO MY HOUSE BECAUSE OF YOU.
YOU RUIN EVERYTHING.

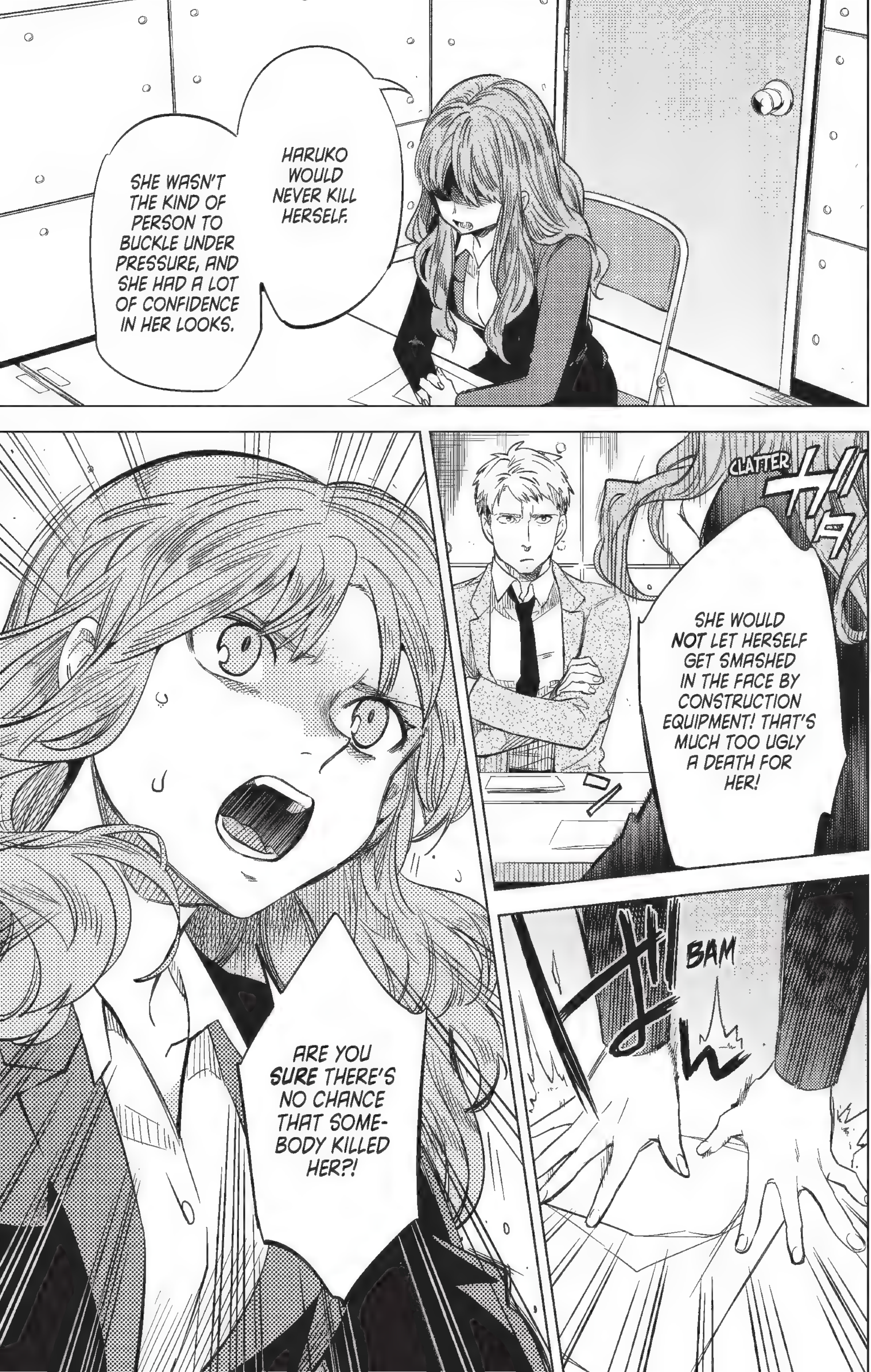

BUT... HATSUMI... WHAT HAPPENED TO DAD WAS...
DAD IS DEAD, HARUKO.
AND SO IS MOM. AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
CLICK
ALSO, HATSUMI HAD BEEN TELLING PEOPLE THAT HER SISTER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR FATHER'S DEATH.
AND IF KARIN DIED, ALL OF THE MONEY SHE EARNED AS AN IDOL WOULD GO DIRECTLY TO HER ONLY LIVING RELATIVE, HATSUMI.

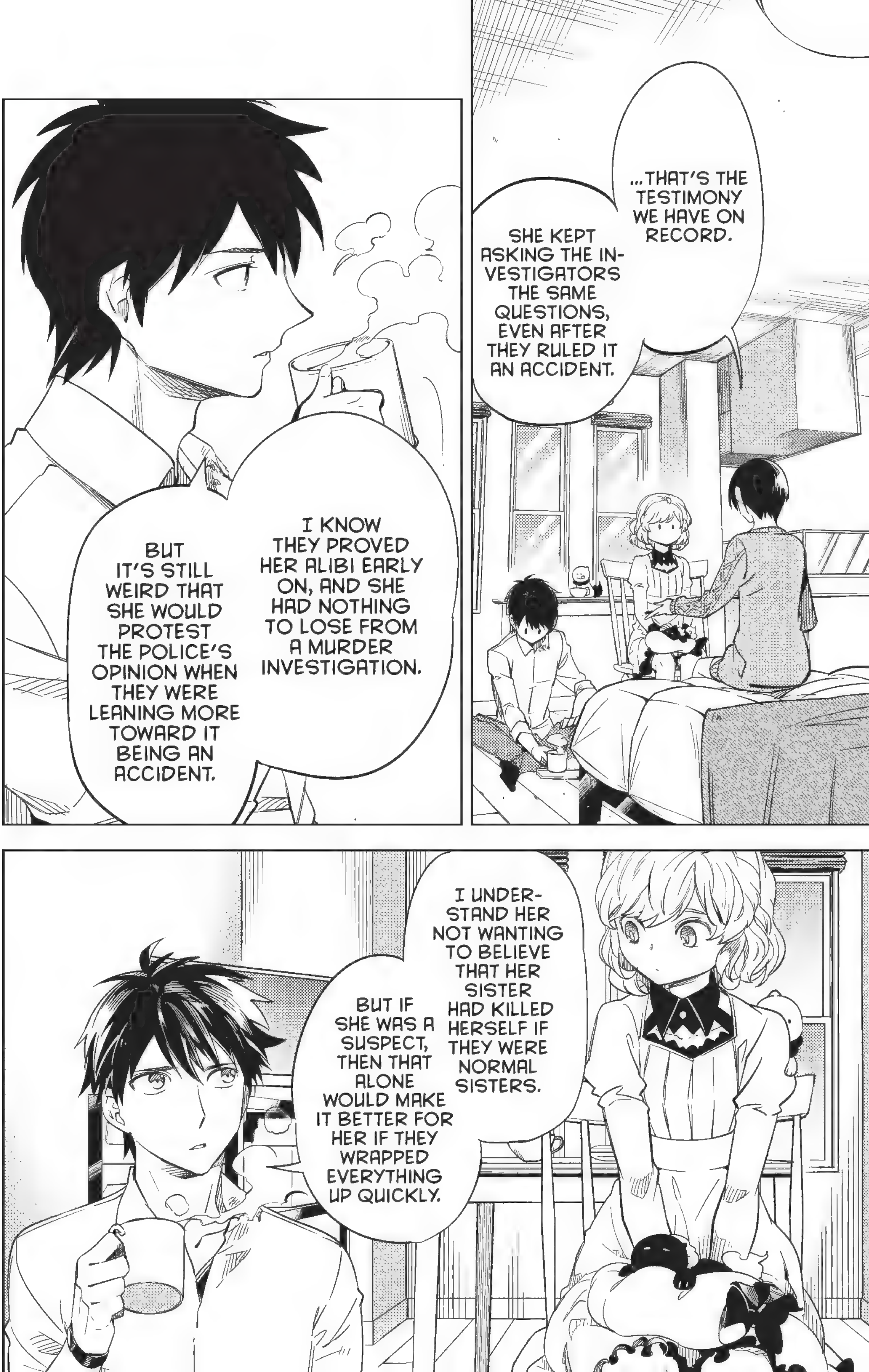

HATSUMI WOULD HAVE PROFITED FROM HER SISTER'S DEATH, EMOTIONALLY AND FINANCIALLY.
SO YOU CAN SEE WHY SHE WAS THE MOST VIABLE SUSPECT.
BUT THEY RULED IT AN ACCIDENT AFTER ABOUT A MONTH. DOES THAT MEAN THE SISTER'S ALIBI WAS AIRTIGHT?
HATSUMI NANASE HAD GONE TO HOKKAIDO WITH FIVE OF HER COLLEGE FRIENDS, INCLUDING HER BOYFRIEND, TO VISIT SOME HOT SPRINGS THERE.
SHE WAS STAYING AT THEIR HOTEL IN HOKKAIDO ON THE NIGHT OF THE INCIDENT.
KARIN NANASE'S ESTIMATED TIME OF DEATH WAS BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND ONE IN THE MORNING.
HATSUMI DIDN'T HAVE A WINDOW OF TIME BIG ENOUGH TO LEAVE HER HOTEL, TRAVEL OVER 500 KM* TO MAKURAZAKA, KILL HER SISTER, AND MAKE IT BACK TO HOKKAIDO.

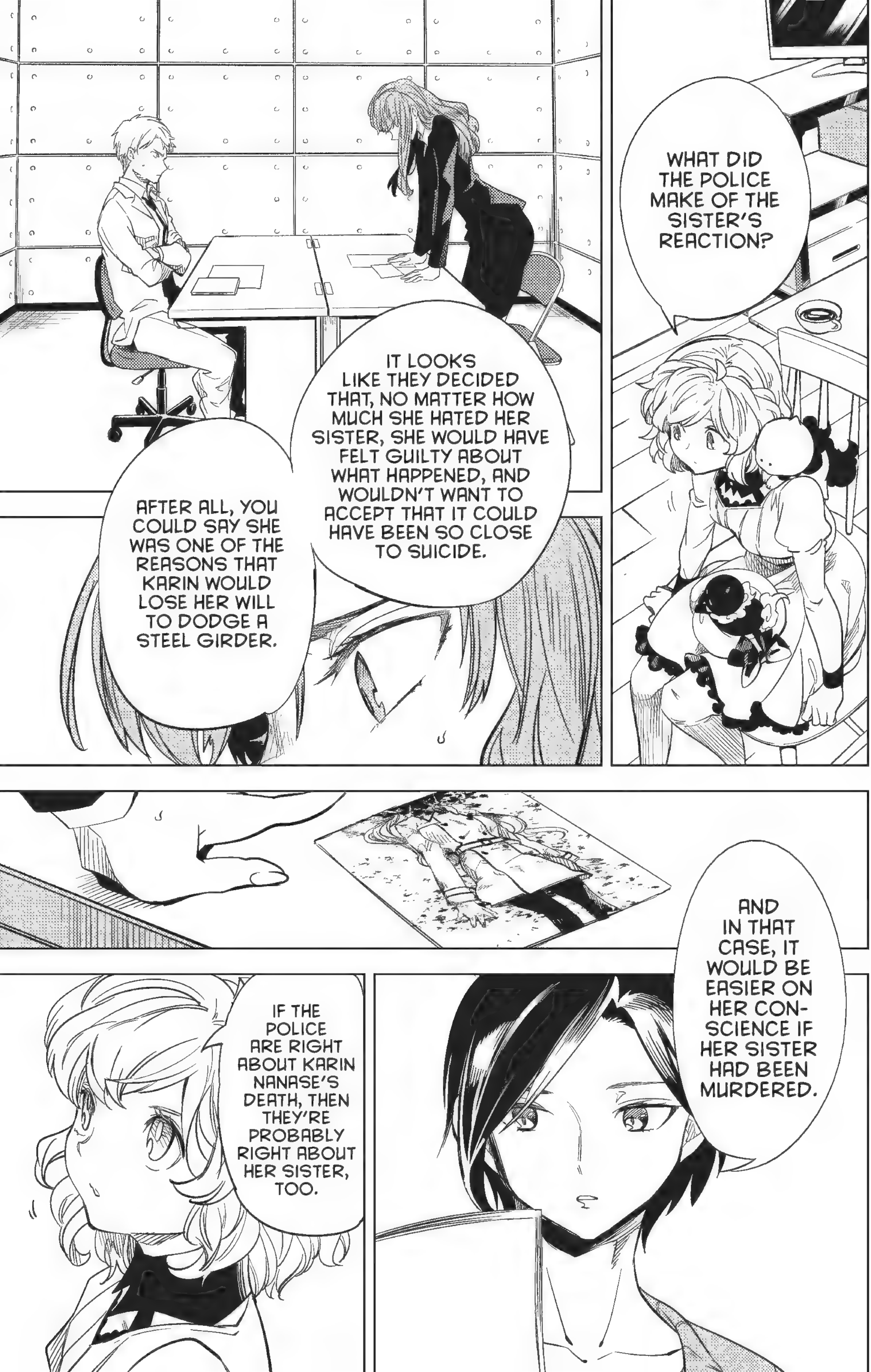
*ABOUT 310 MI.

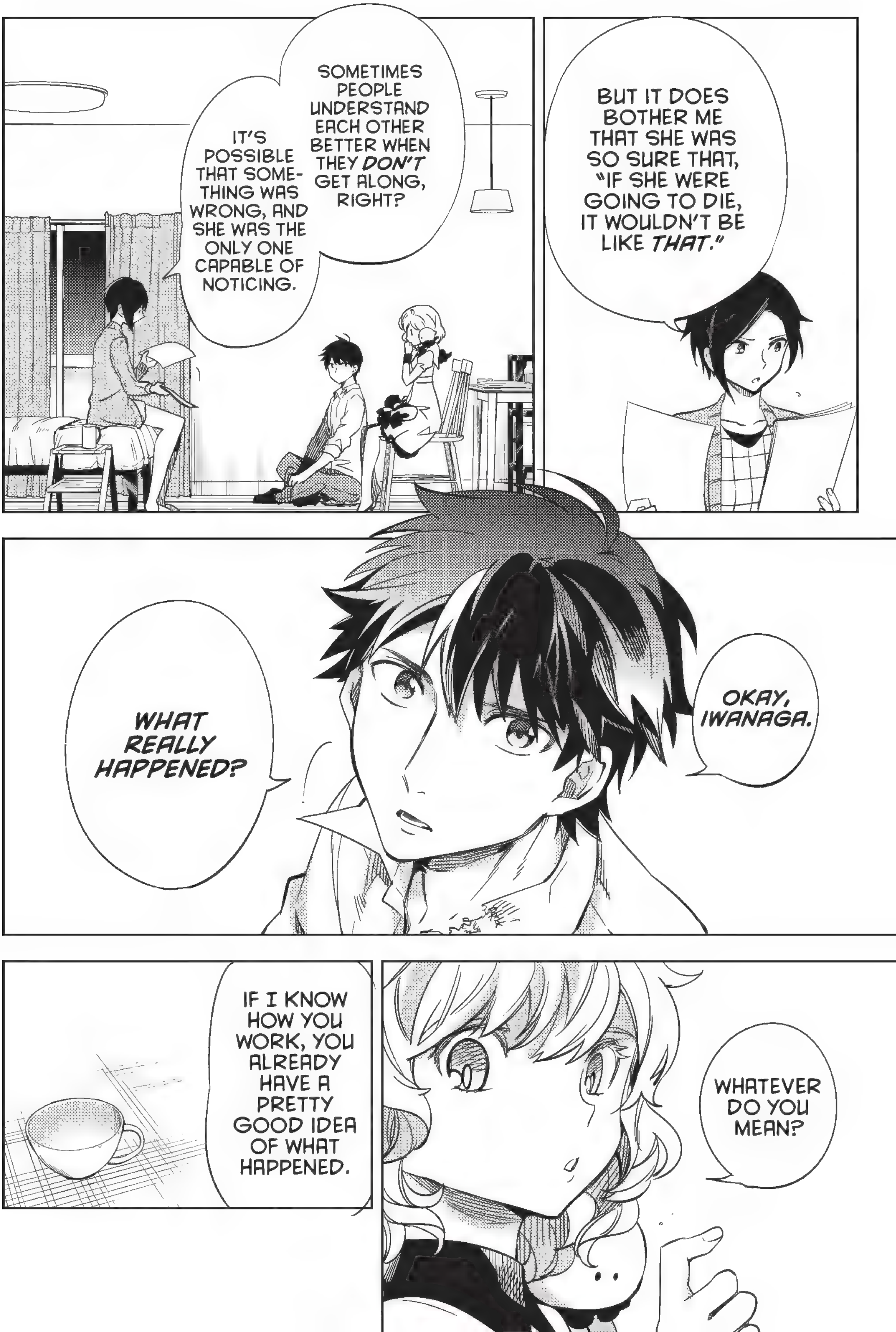

APPARENTLY, HATSUMI HAD INVITED HER FRIENDS ON THAT TRIP AS AN APOLOGY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE THE MEDIA HAD CAUSED THEIR FAMILIES.
AS AN ALIBI, IT WORKS.
I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS...
Hmm...
BUT THE POLICE WOULD HAVE INVESTIGATED EVERY POSSIBLE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION.
AND THEY WOULDN'T HAVE ONLY TRUSTED HER FRIENDS AND LOVER—THEY WOULD HAVE ASKED HOTEL EMPLOYEES, ETC. TO CORROBORATE.
AND...
FLIP

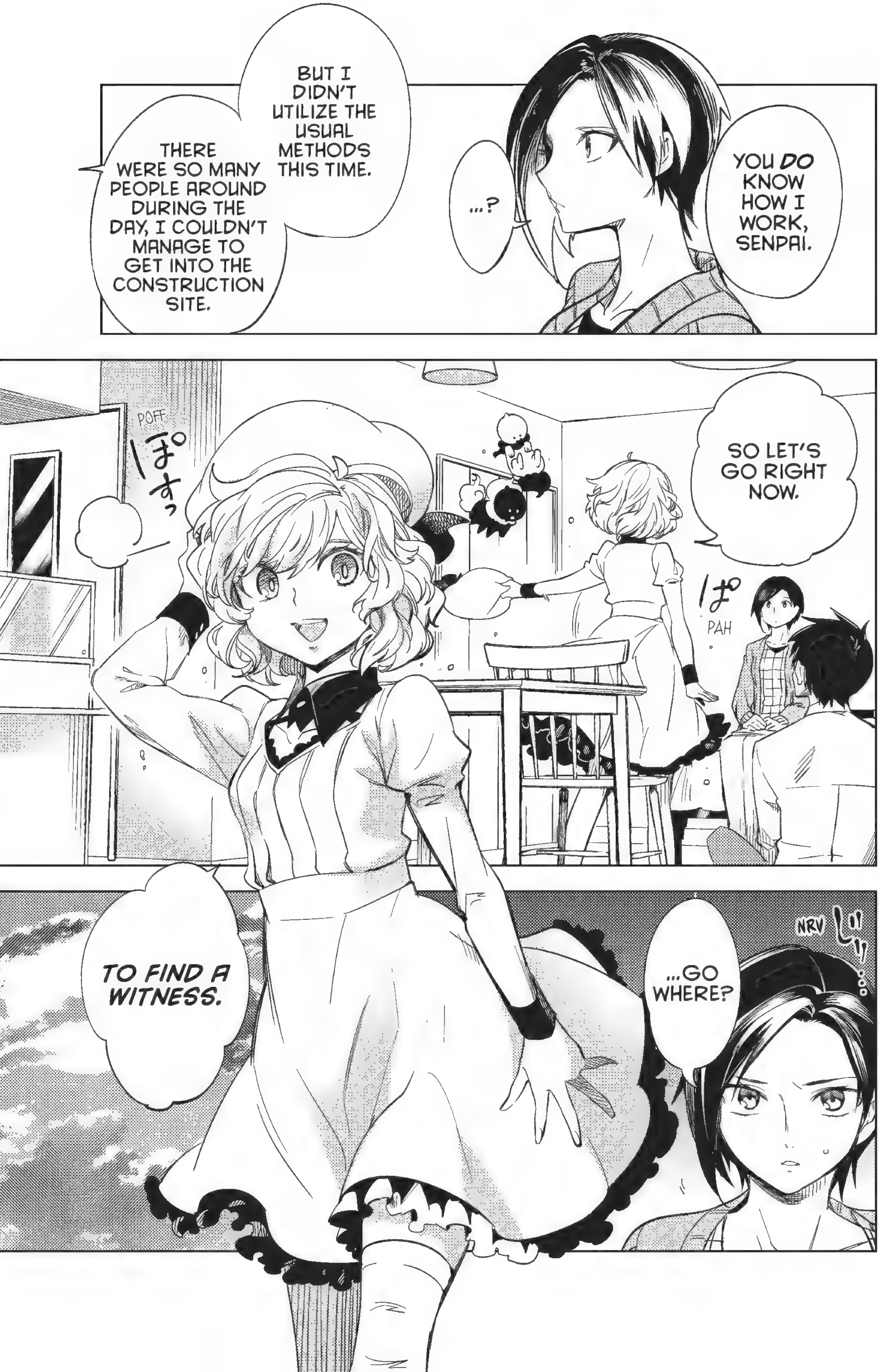

THE BIGGEST QUESTION SURROUNDING KARIN NANASE'S DEATH IS HATSUMI NANASE HERSELF.
DURING THE INVESTIGATION, SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE...
...WHO EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT HER SISTER WOULD KILL HERSELF OR WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A MENTAL STATE WHERE SHE WOULD CONSIDER IT.
SHE ADAMANTLY REFUSED TO BELIEVE IT.
OH.
I DID READ SOME COMMENTS TO THAT EFFECT IN THE TABLOIDS.

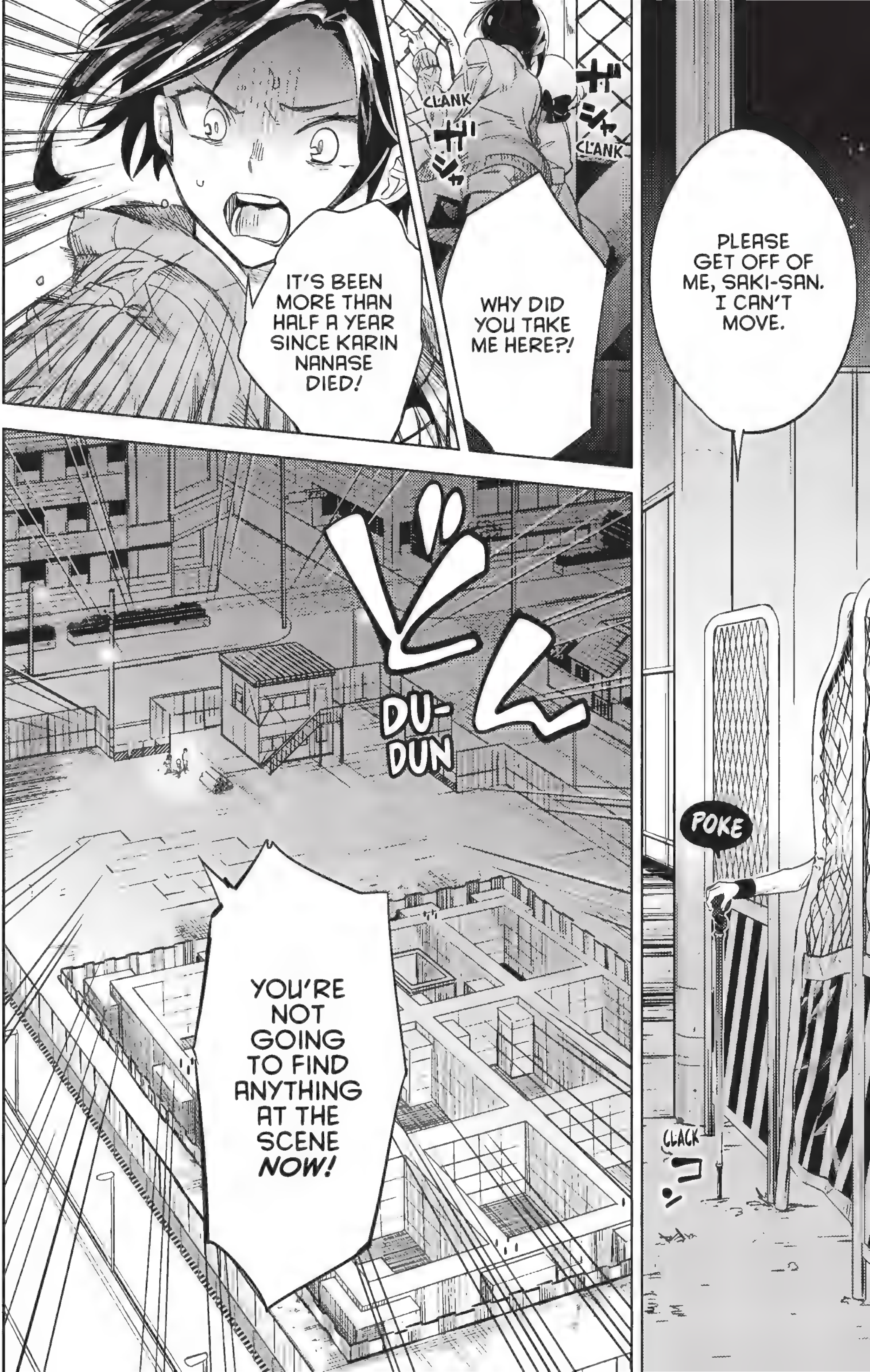

HARUKO WOULD NEVER KILL HERSELF.
SHE WASN'T THE KIND OF PERSON TO BUCKLE UNDER PRESSURE, AND SHE HAD A LOT OF CONFIDENCE IN HER LOOKS.
CLATTER
ガタ
SHE WOULD NOT LET HERSELF GET SMASHED IN THE FACE BY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT! THAT'S MUCH TOO UGLY A DEATH FOR HER!
BAM
ダン
ARE YOU SURE THERE'S NO CHANCE THAT SOMEBODY KILLED HER?!

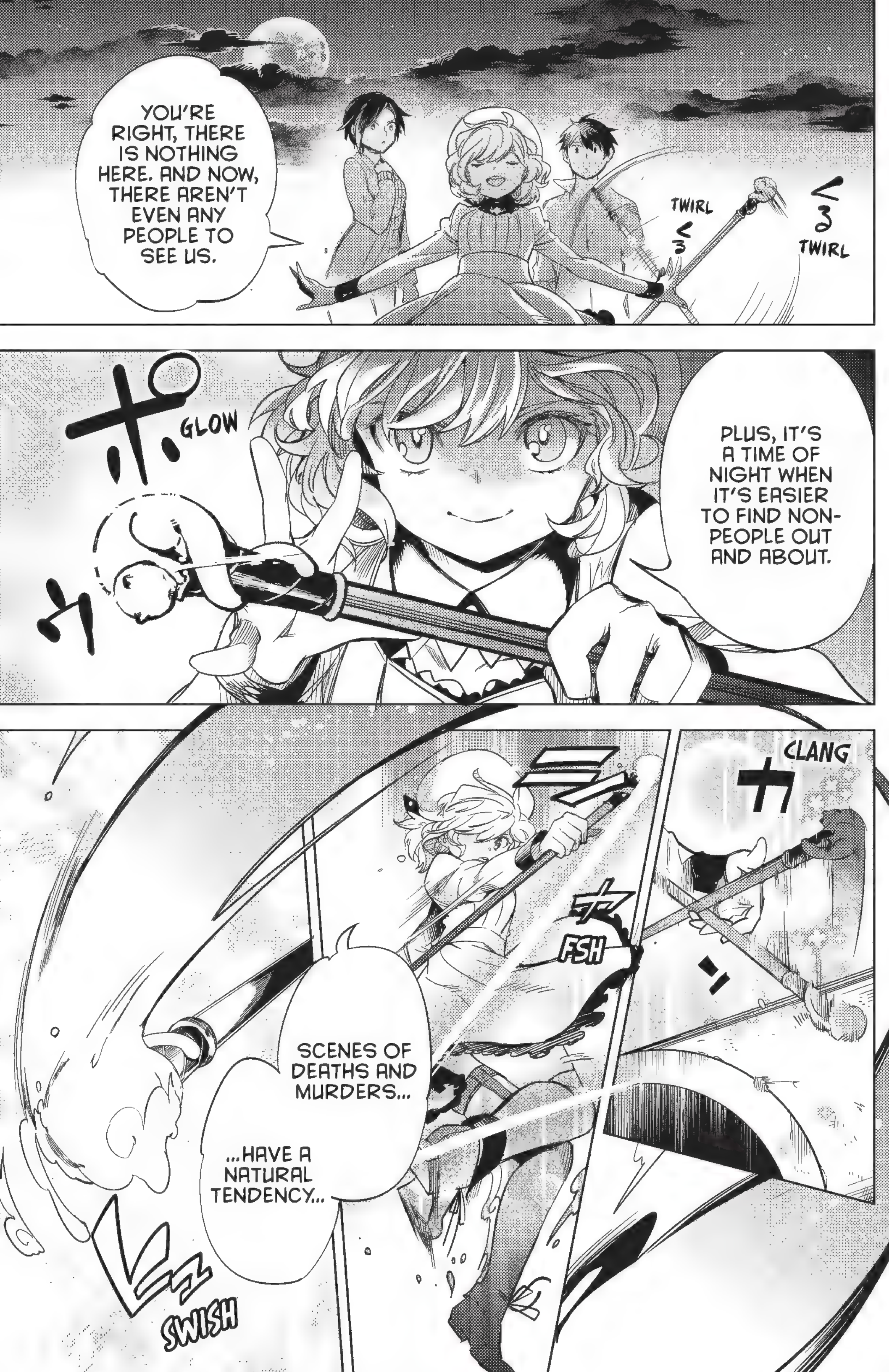

...THAT'S THE TESTIMONY WE HAVE ON RECORD.
SHE KEPT ASKING THE INVESTIGATORS THE SAME QUESTIONS, EVEN AFTER THEY RULED IT AN ACCIDENT.
I KNOW THEY PROVED HER ALIBI EARLY ON, AND SHE HAD NOTHING TO LOSE FROM A MURDER INVESTIGATION.
BUT IT'S STILL WEIRD THAT SHE WOULD PROTEST THE POLICE'S OPINION WHEN THEY WERE LEANING MORE TOWARD IT BEING AN ACCIDENT.
I UNDERSTAND HER NOT WANTING TO BELIEVE THAT HER SISTER HAD KILLED HERSELF IF THEY WERE NORMAL SISTERS.
BUT IF SHE WAS A SUSPECT, THEN THAT ALONE WOULD MAKE IT BETTER FOR HER IF THEY WRAPPED EVERYTHING UP QUICKLY.

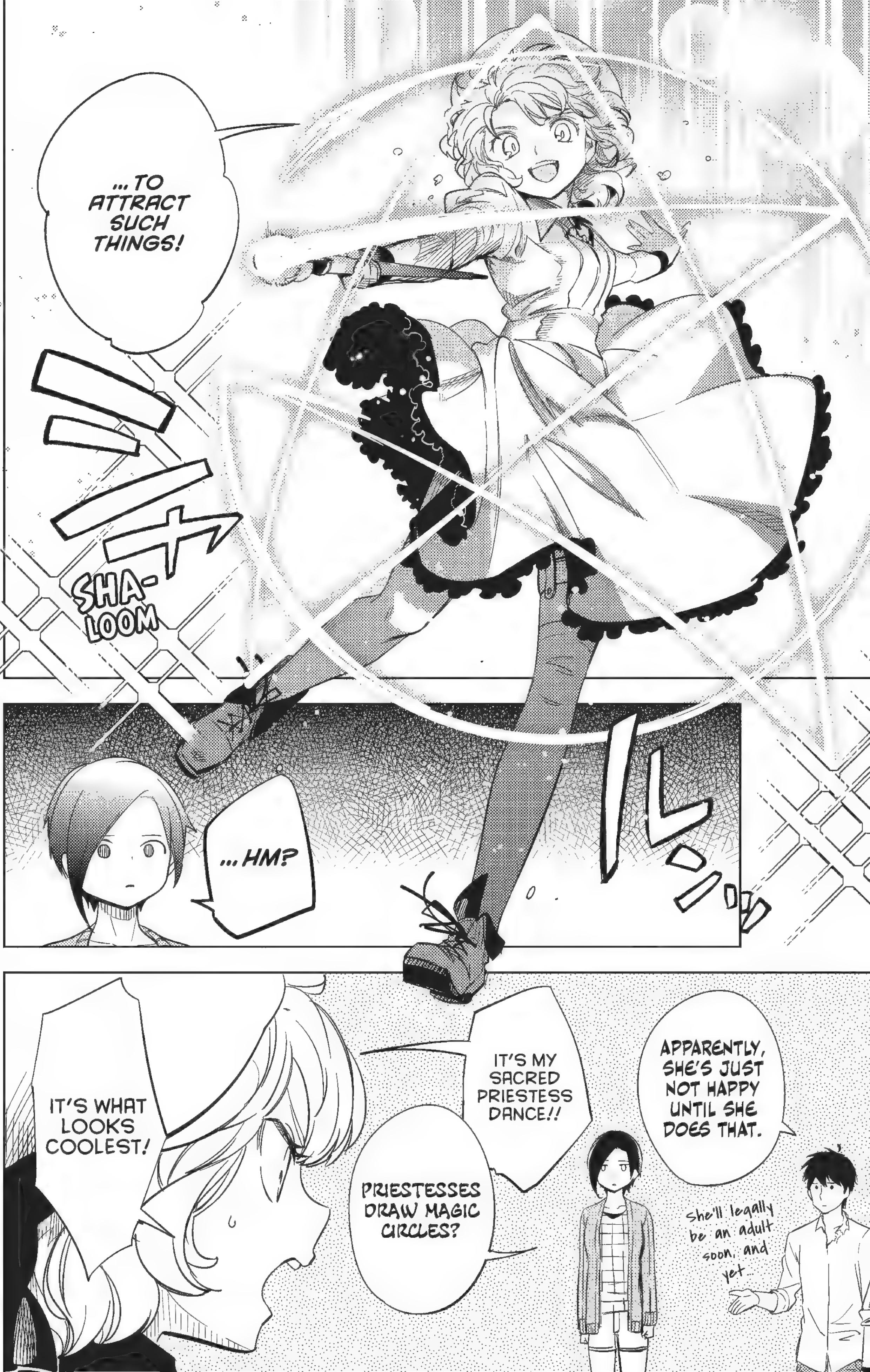

WHAT DID THE POLICE MAKE OF THE SISTER'S REACTION?
IT LOOKS LIKE THEY DECIDED THAT, NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHE HATED HER SISTER, SHE WOULD HAVE FELT GUILTY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, AND WOULDN'T WANT TO ACCEPT THAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN SO CLOSE TO SUICIDE.
AFTER ALL, YOU COULD SAY SHE WAS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT KARIN WOULD LOSE HER WILL TO DODGE A STEEL GIRDER.
AND IN THAT CASE, IT WOULD BE EASIER ON HER CONSCIENCE IF HER SISTER HAD BEEN MURDERED.
IF THE POLICE ARE RIGHT ABOUT KARIN NANASE'S DEATH, THEN THEY'RE PROBABLY RIGHT ABOUT HER SISTER, TOO.

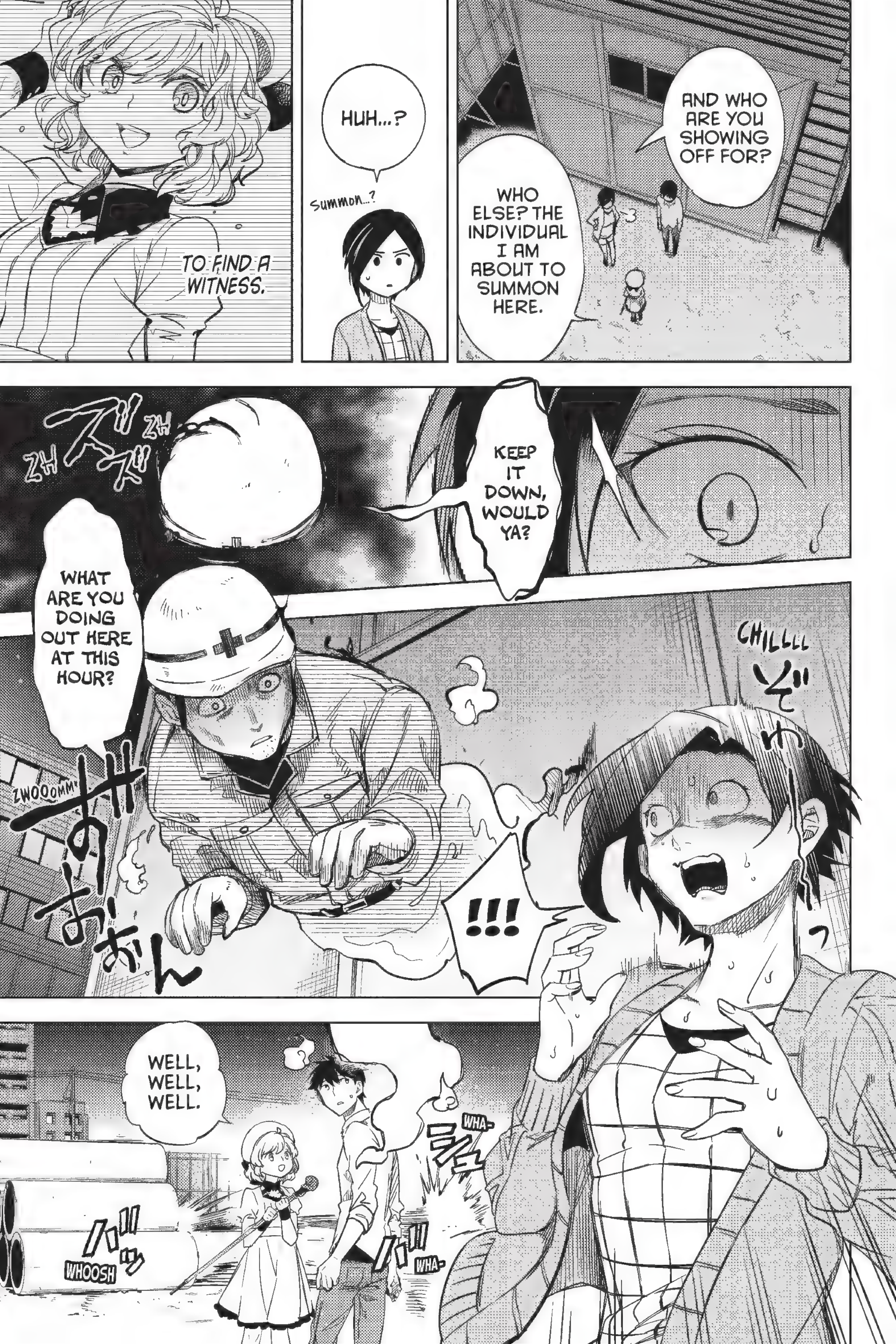

IT'S POSSIBLE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG, AND SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE CAPABLE OF NOTICING.
SOMETIMES PEOPLE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER WHEN THEY *DON'T* GET ALONG, RIGHT?
BUT IT DOES BOTHER ME THAT SHE WAS SO SURE THAT, "IF SHE WERE GOING TO DIE, IT WOULDN'T BE LIKE *THAT*."
OKAY, IWANAGA.
WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?
IF I KNOW HOW YOU WORK, YOU ALREADY HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF WHAT HAPPENED.
WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?

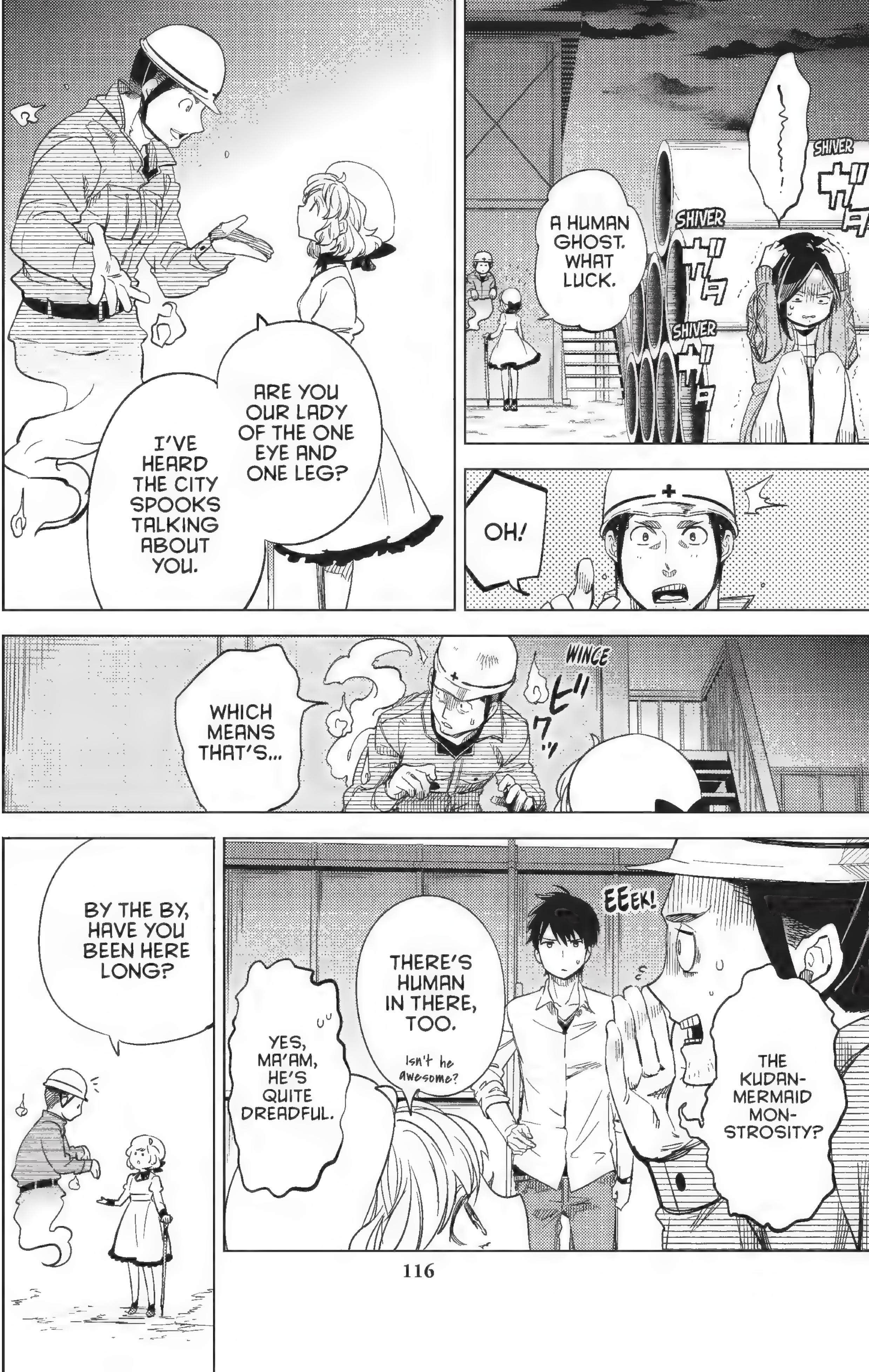

YOU *DO* KNOW HOW I WORK, SENPAI.
...?
BUT I DIDN'T UTILIZE THE USUAL METHODS THIS TIME.
THERE WERE SO MANY PEOPLE AROUND DURING THE DAY, I COULDN'T MANAGE TO GET INTO THE CONSTRUCTION SITE.
SO LET'S GO RIGHT NOW.
ぱ PAH
ぽすっ POFF
NRV じー…
...GO WHERE?
TO FIND A WITNESS.

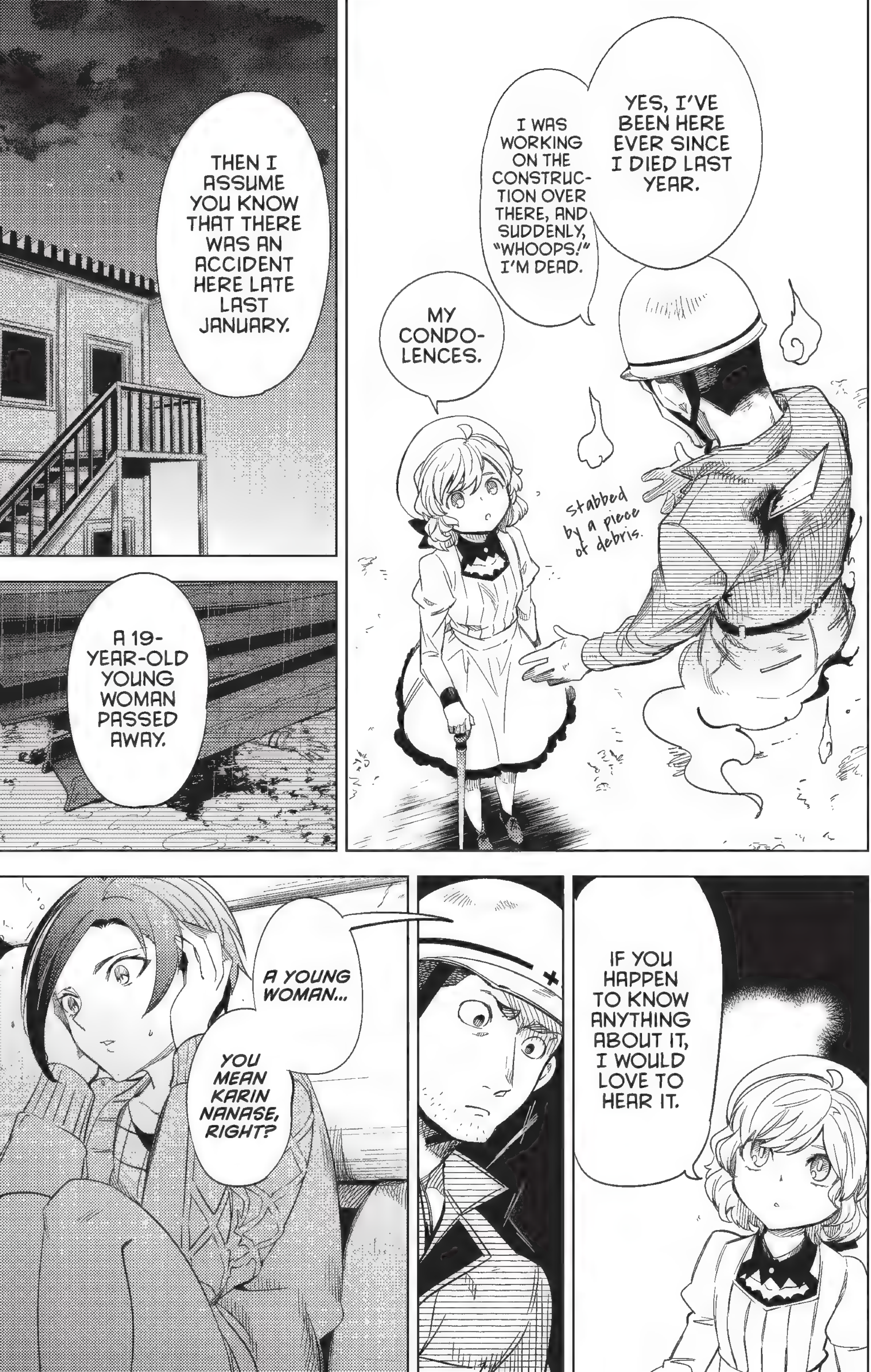

PLEASE GET OFF OF ME, SAKI-SAN. I CAN'T MOVE.
POKE
CLACK
コ
CLANK
ガシャ
CLANK
ガシャ
WHY DID YOU TAKE ME HERE?!
IT'S BEEN MORE THAN HALF A YEAR SINCE KARIN NANASE DIED!
ドン
DU-DUN
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FIND ANYTHING AT THE SCENE *NOW!*

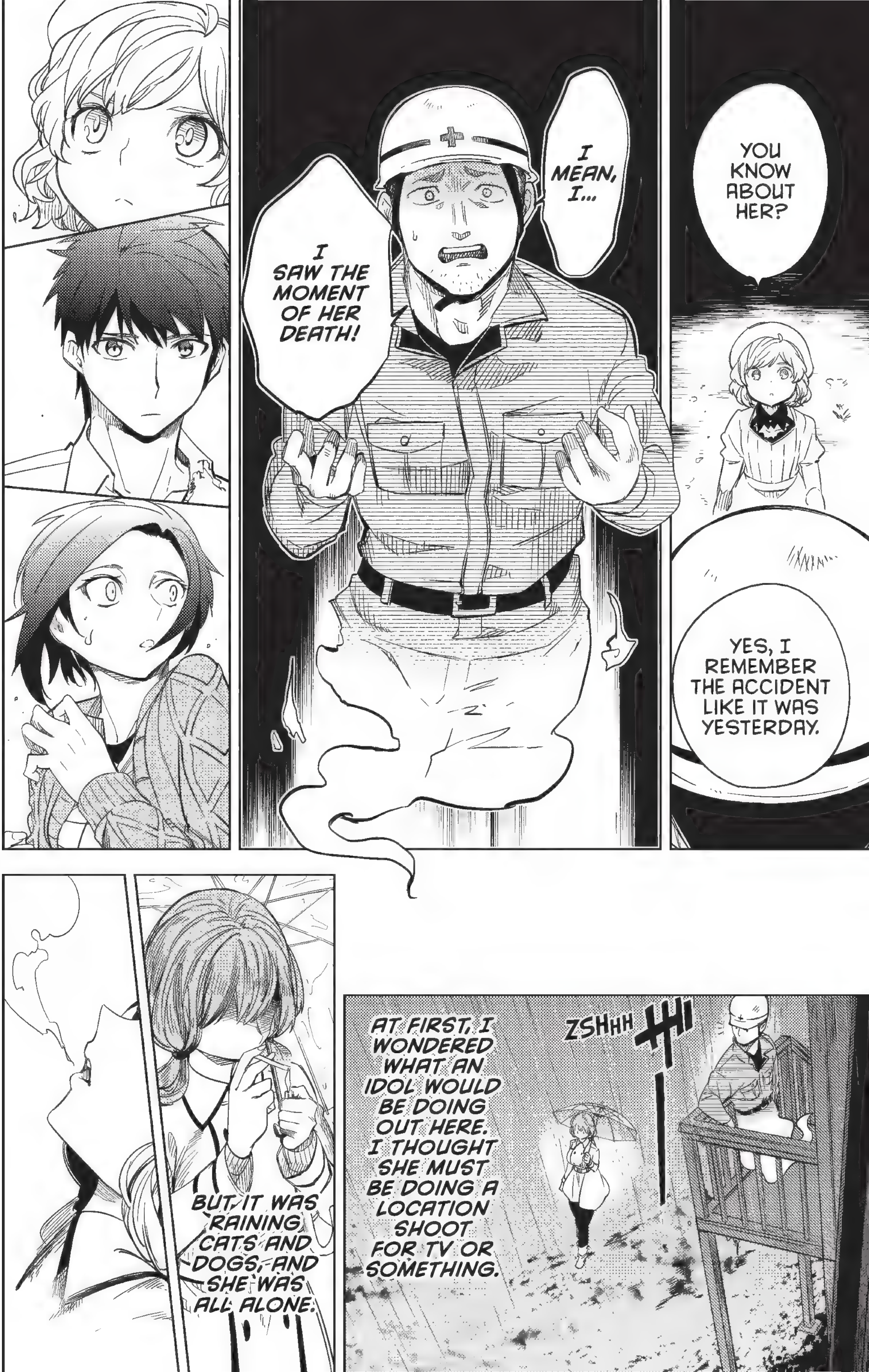

くる TWIRL
くる TWIRL
YOU'RE RIGHT, THERE IS NOTHING HERE. AND NOW, THERE AREN'T EVEN ANY PEOPLE TO SEE US.
PLUS, IT'S A TIME OF NIGHT WHEN IT'S EASIER TO FIND NON-PEOPLE OUT AND ABOUT.
ポ GLOW
CLANG
FSH
SCENES OF DEATHS AND MURDERS...
...HAVE A NATURAL TENDENCY...
SWISH

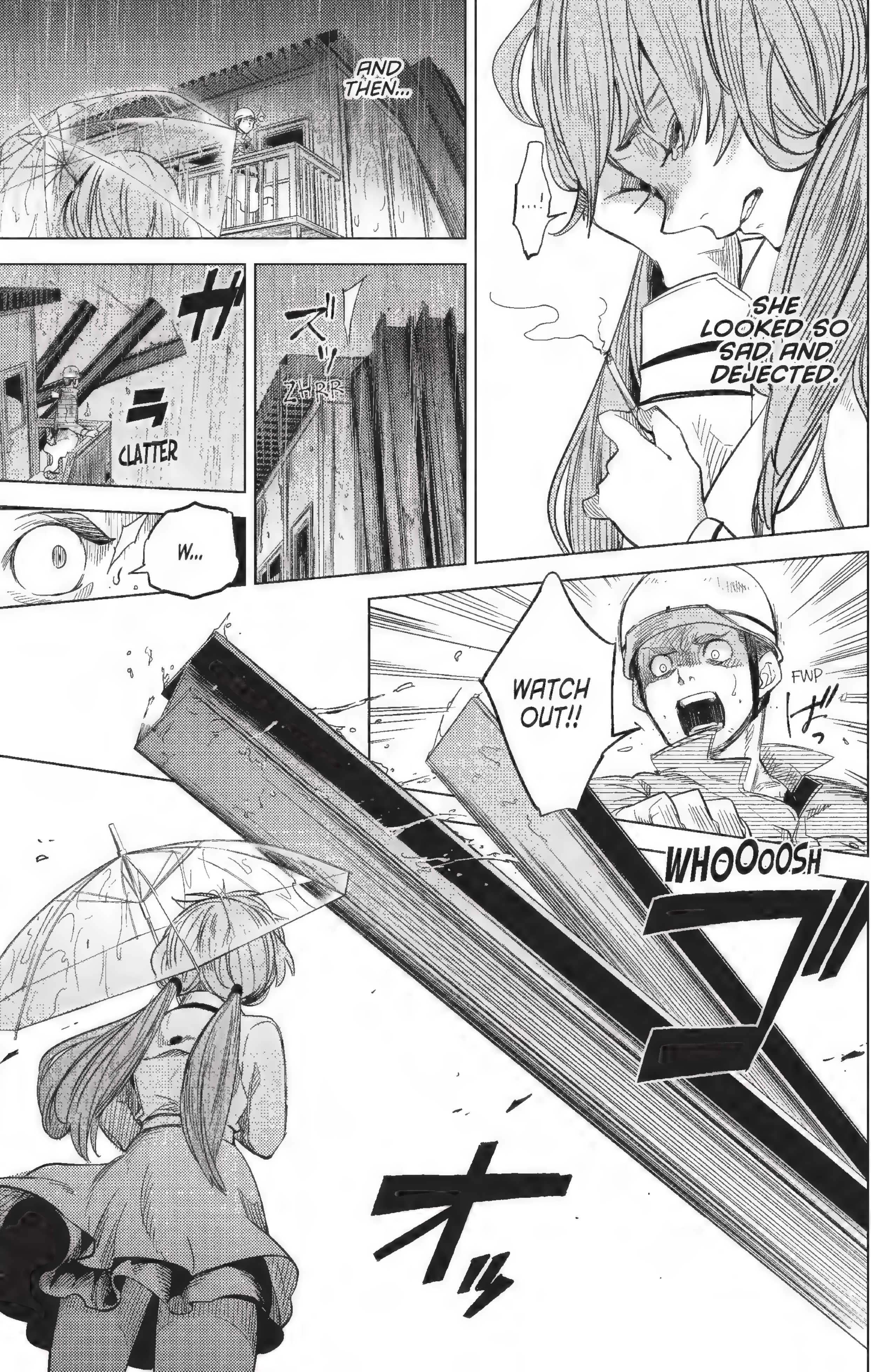

...TO ATTRACT SUCH THINGS!
SHA-LOOM
...HM?
APPARENTLY, SHE'S JUST NOT HAPPY UNTIL SHE DOES THAT.
She'll legally be an adult soon, and yet...
IT'S MY SACRED PRIESTESS DANCE!!
PRIESTESSES DRAW MAGIC CIRCLES?
IT'S WHAT LOOKS COOLEST!

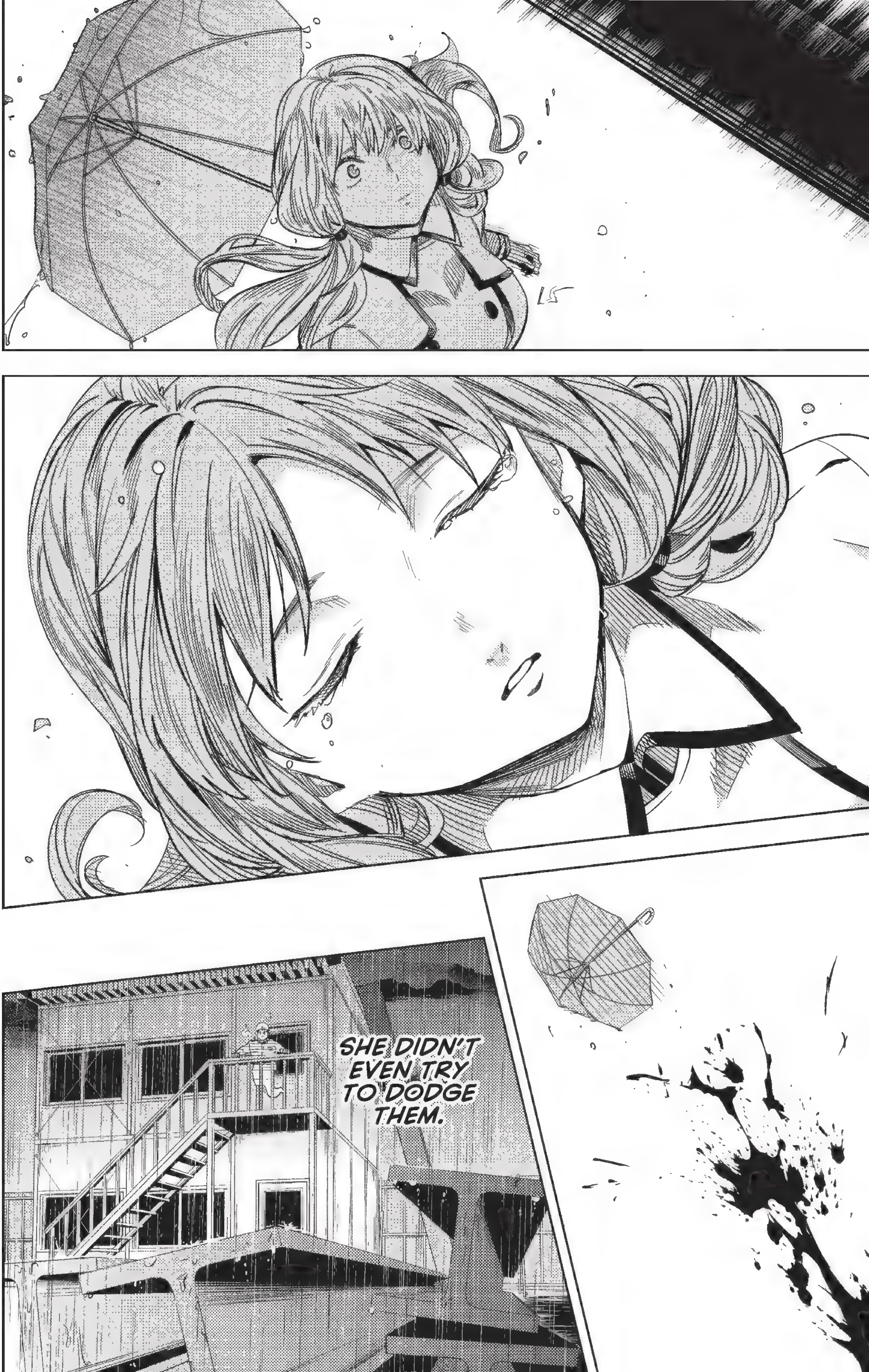

AND WHO ARE YOU SHOWING OFF FOR?
WHO ELSE? THE INDIVIDUAL I AM ABOUT TO SUMMON HERE.
HUH...?
Summon...?
TO FIND A WITNESS.
KEEP IT DOWN, WOULD YA?
ズズ
ZH ZH
CHILLLL
ぞわ
!!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE AT THIS HOUR?
おおおおん
ZWOOOMM
WHA-
シュ
WELL, WELL, WELL.
バッ
WHOOSH
バッ
WHA-

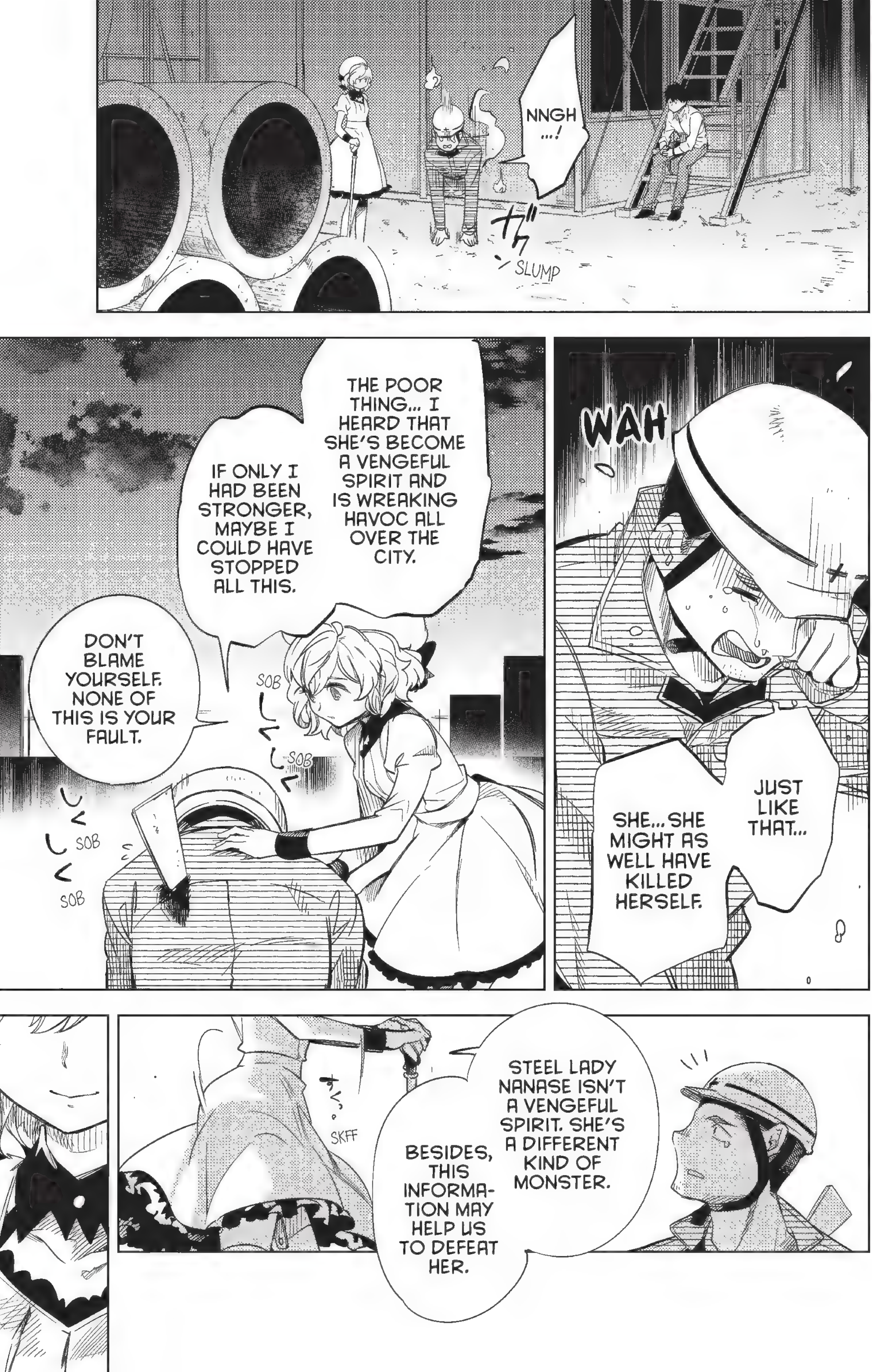

……!
SHIVER ガタ
A HUMAN GHOST. WHAT LUCK.
SHIVER ガタ
SHIVER ガタ
OH!
ARE YOU OUR LADY OF THE ONE EYE AND ONE LEG?
I'VE HEARD THE CITY SPOOKS TALKING ABOUT YOU.
WINCE ビクッ
WHICH MEANS THAT'S...
THE KUDAN-MERMAID MONSTROSITY?
EEEK!
THERE'S HUMAN IN THERE, TOO.
Isn't he awesome?
YES, MA'AM, HE'S QUITE DREADFUL.
BY THE BY, HAVE YOU BEEN HERE LONG?

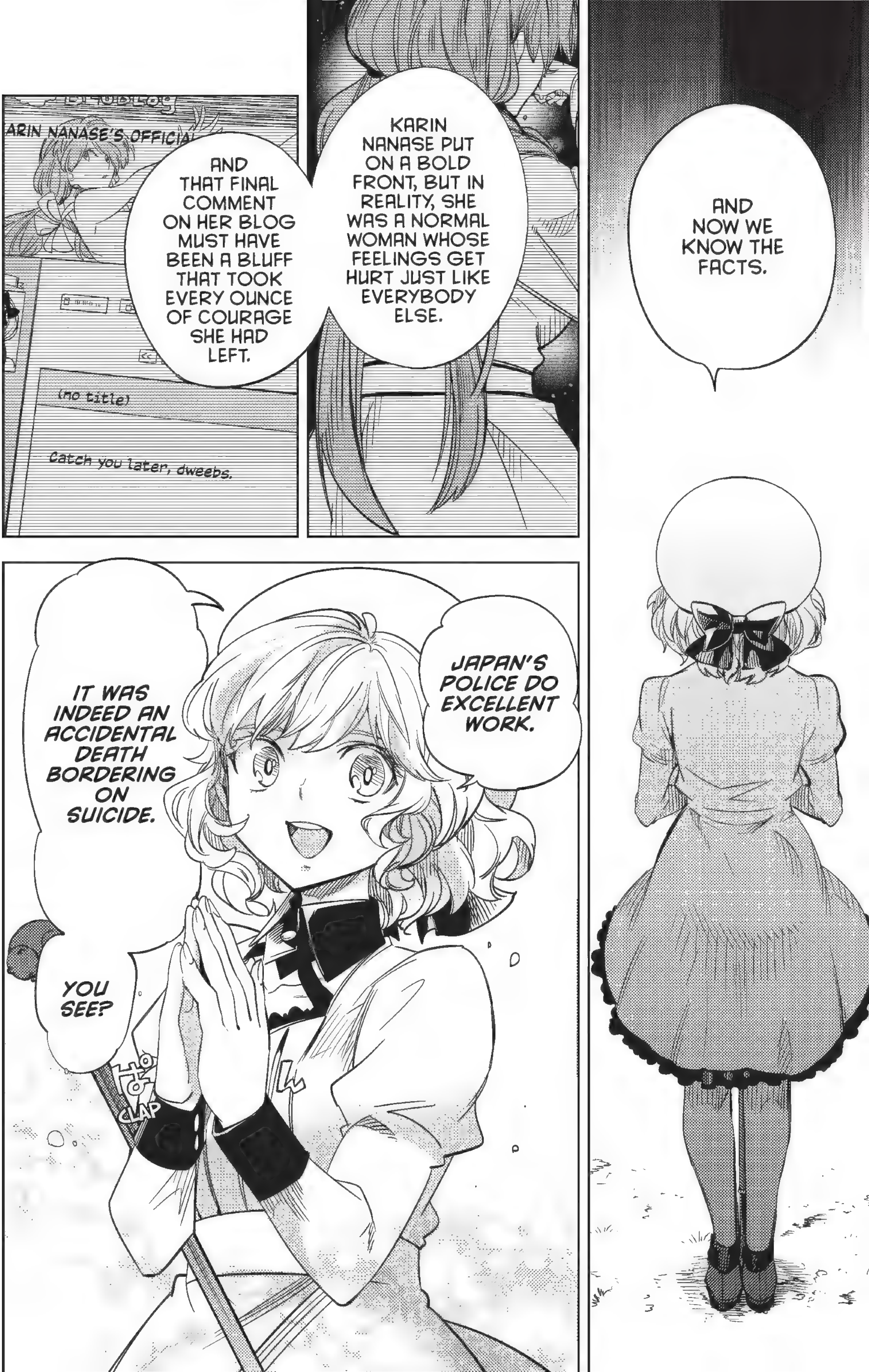

YES, I'VE BEEN HERE EVER SINCE I DIED LAST YEAR.
I WAS WORKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION OVER THERE, AND SUDDENLY, "WHOOPS!" I'M DEAD.
MY CONDOLENCES.
stabbed by a piece of debris.
THEN I ASSUME YOU KNOW THAT THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT HERE LATE LAST JANUARY.
A 19-YEAR-OLD YOUNG WOMAN PASSED AWAY.
IF YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT, I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR IT.
A YOUNG WOMAN...
YOU MEAN KARIN NANASE, RIGHT?

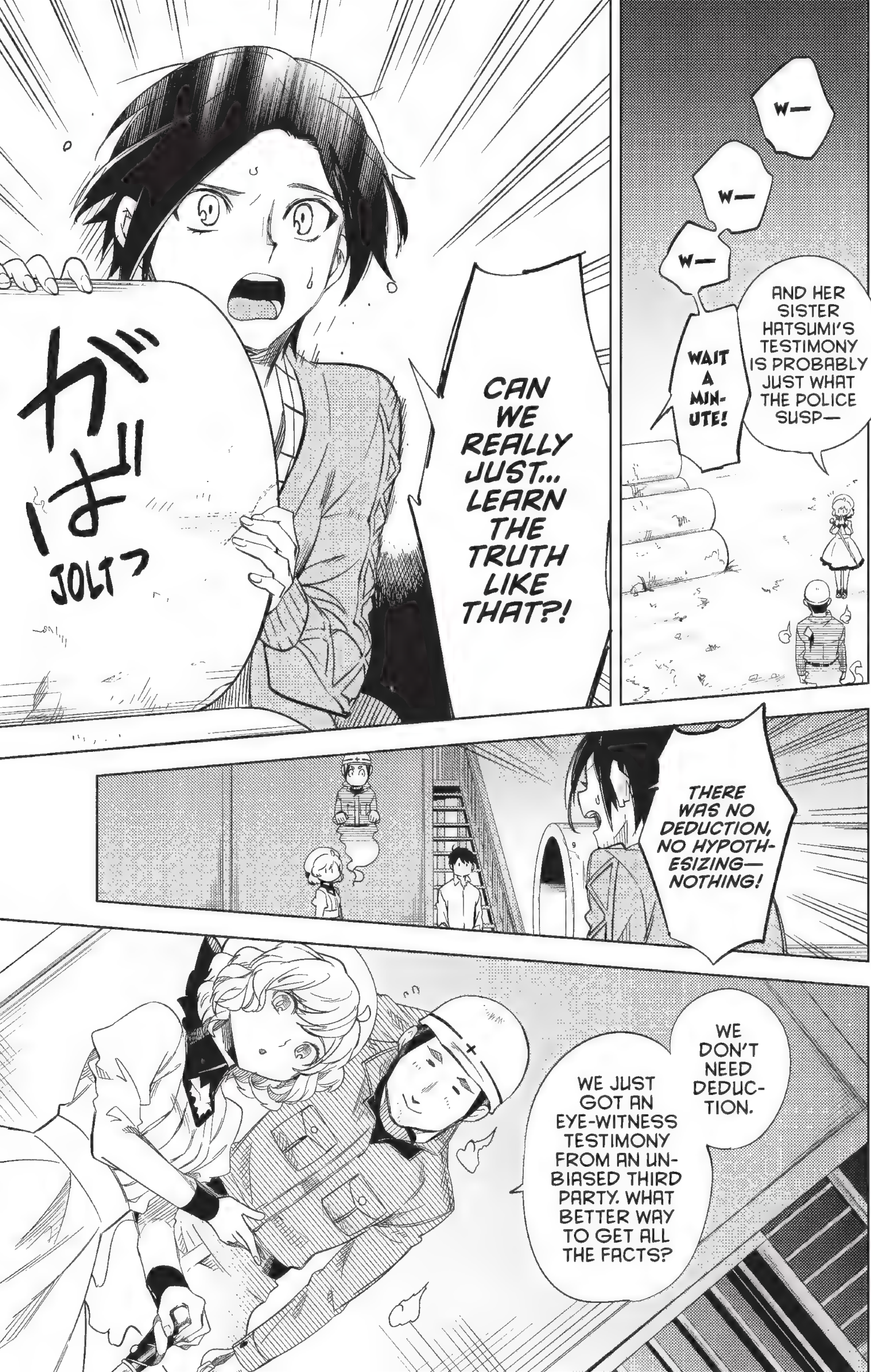

YOU KNOW ABOUT HER?
YES, I REMEMBER THE ACCIDENT LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY.
I MEAN, I...
I SAW THE MOMENT OF HER DEATH!
ZSHHH
AT FIRST, I WONDERED WHAT AN IDOL WOULD BE DOING OUT HERE. I THOUGHT SHE MUST BE DOING A LOCATION SHOOT FOR TV OR SOMETHING.
BUT IT WAS RAINING CATS AND DOGS, AND SHE WAS ALL ALONE.

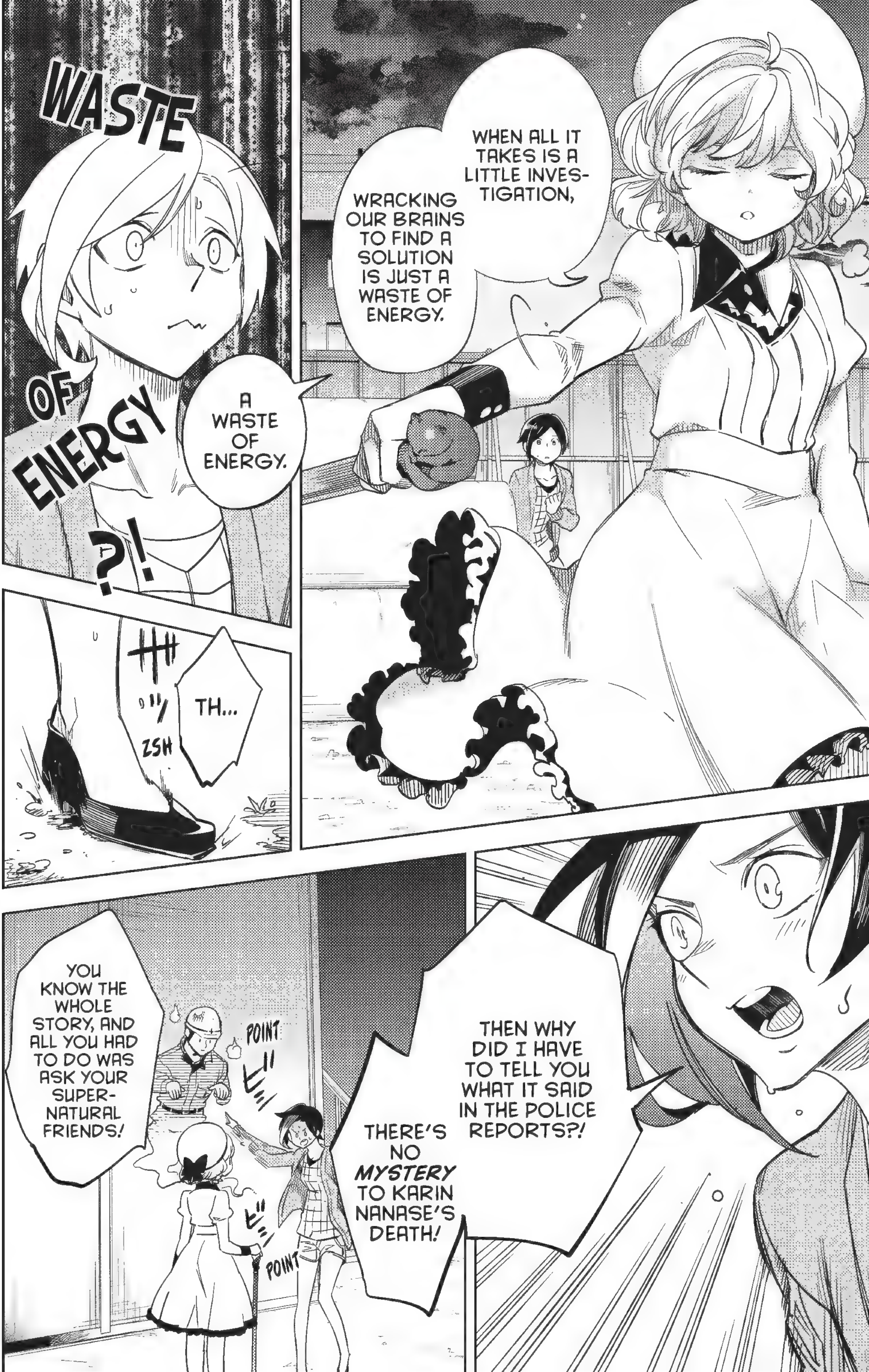

....!
SHE LOOKED SO SAD AND DEJECTED.
AND THEN...
ズッ
ZURR
ガラ
CLATTER
W...
WATCH OUT!!
ぱっ
FWP
ゴ
WHOOOOSH
オッ

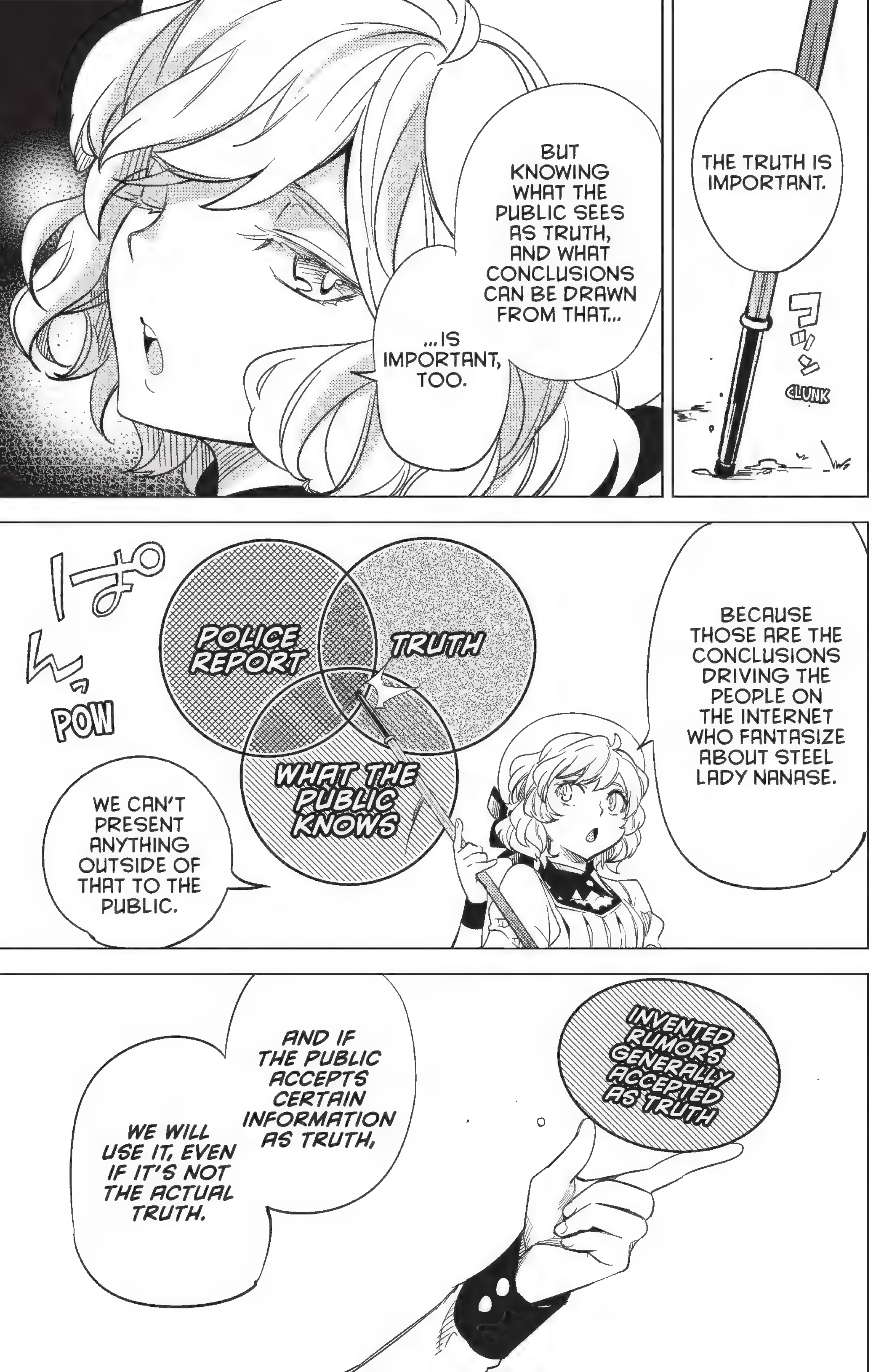

SHE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO DODGE THEM.

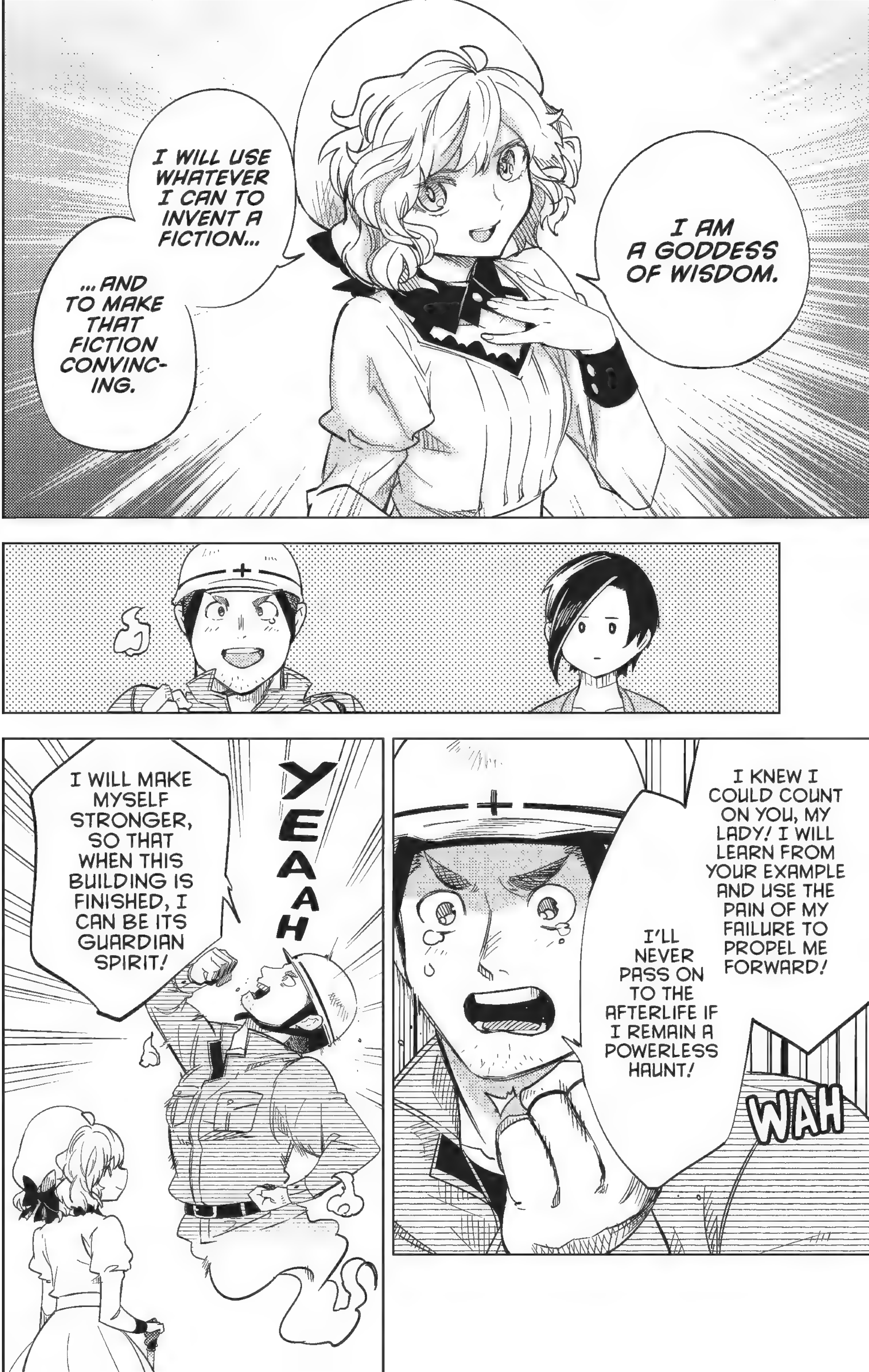

NNGH ...!
SLUMP
WAH
JUST LIKE THAT...
SHE... SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE KILLED HERSELF.
THE POOR THING... I HEARD THAT SHE'S BECOME A VENGEFUL SPIRIT AND IS WREAKING HAVOC ALL OVER THE CITY.
IF ONLY I HAD BEEN STRONGER, MAYBE I COULD HAVE STOPPED ALL THIS.
SOB
SOB
DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. NONE OF THIS IS YOUR FAULT.
SOB
SOB
STEEL LADY NANASE ISN'T A VENGEFUL SPIRIT. SHE'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF MONSTER.
BESIDES, THIS INFORMATION MAY HELP US TO DEFEAT HER.
SKFF

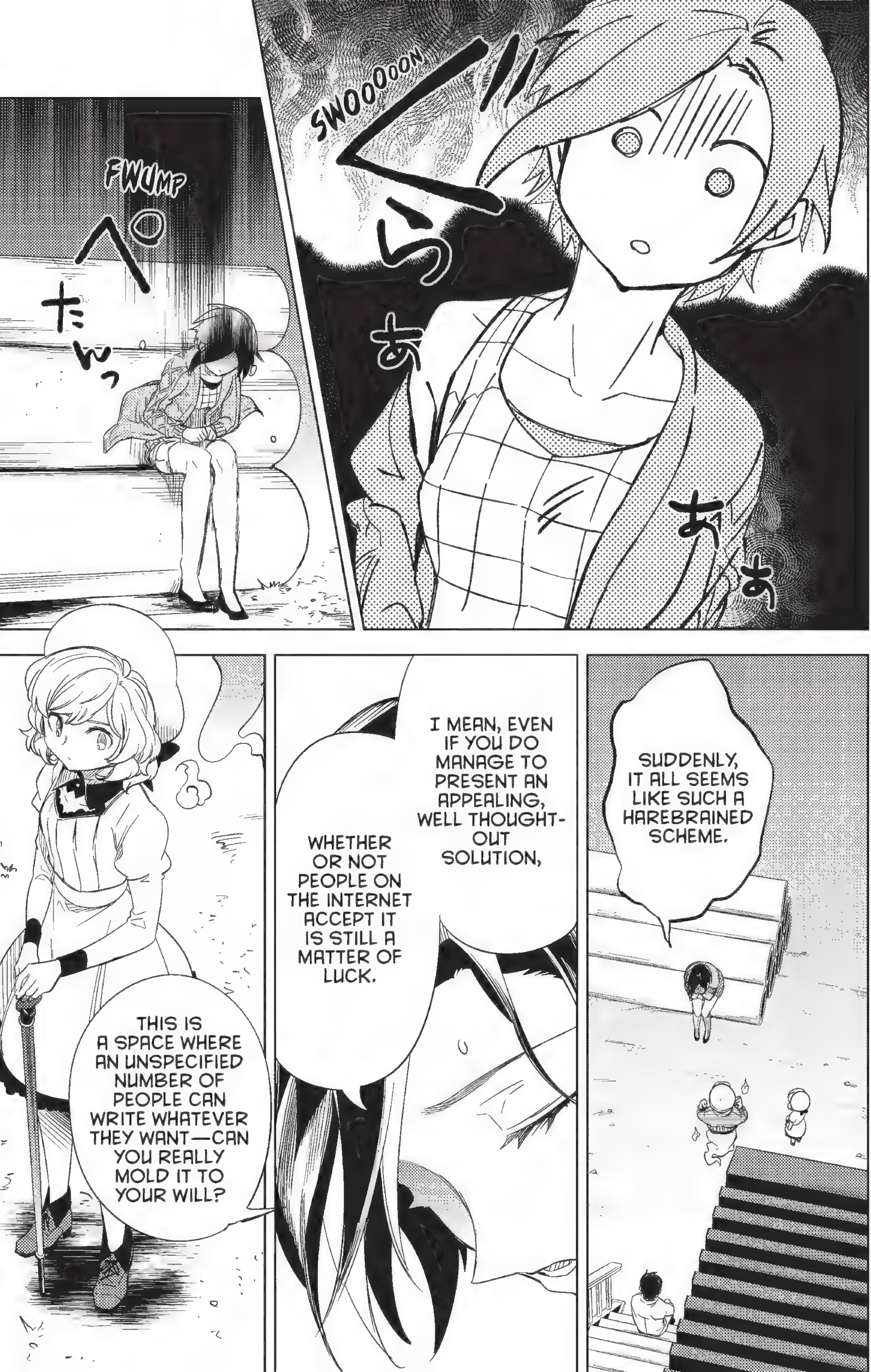

KARIN NANASE PUT ON A BOLD FRONT, BUT IN REALITY, SHE WAS A NORMAL WOMAN WHOSE FEELINGS GET HURT JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE.
ARIN NANASE'S OFFICIAL
AND THAT FINAL COMMENT ON HER BLOG MUST HAVE BEEN A BLUFF THAT TOOK EVERY OUNCE OF COURAGE SHE HAD LEFT.
(no title)
Catch you later, dweebs.
AND NOW WE KNOW THE FACTS.
JAPAN'S POLICE DO EXCELLENT WORK.
IT WAS INDEED AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH BORDERING ON SUICIDE.
YOU SEE?
CLAP

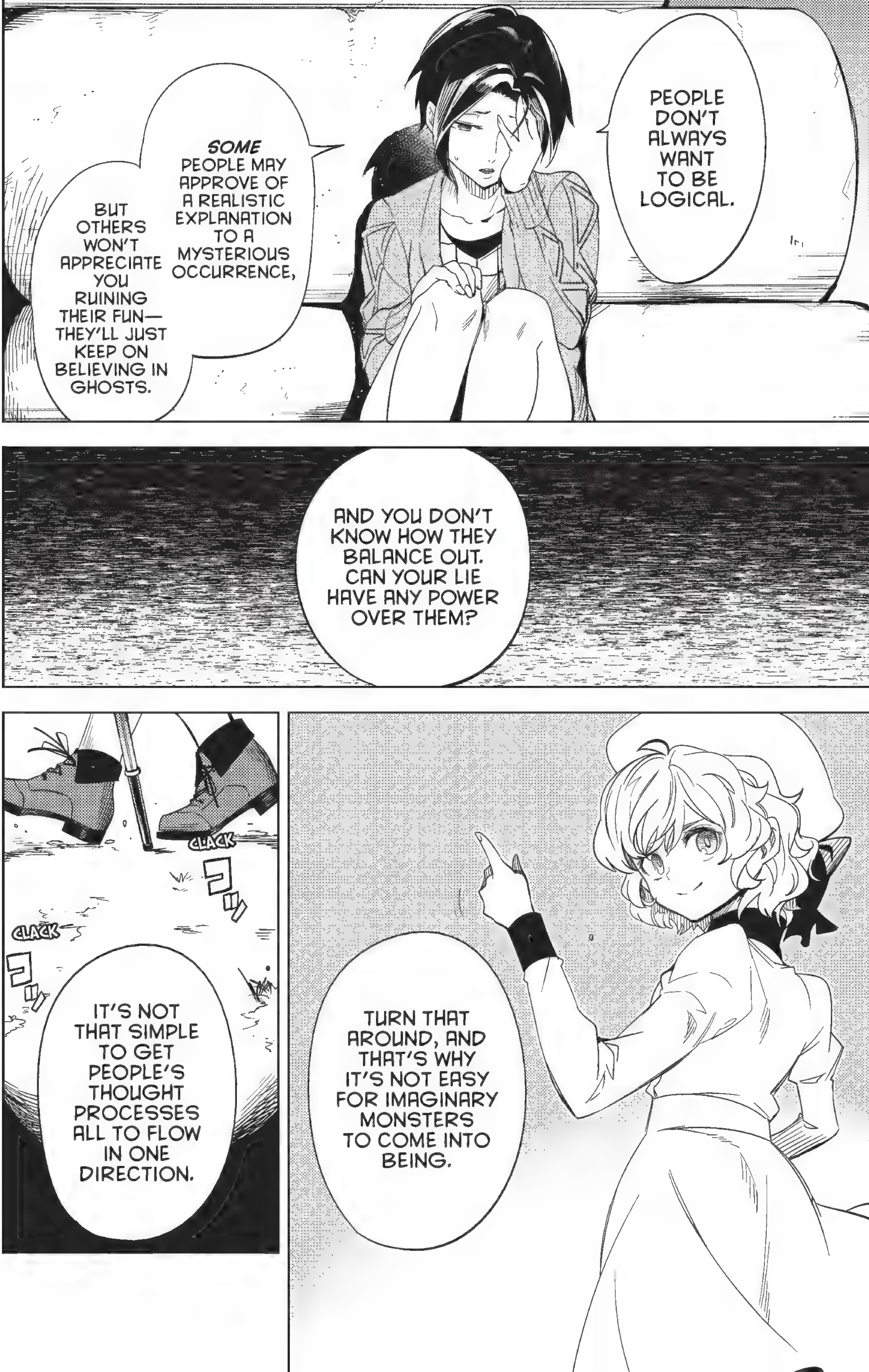

AND HER SISTER HATSUMI'S TESTIMONY IS PROBABLY JUST WHAT THE POLICE SUSP—
W—
W—
W—
WAIT A MINUTE!
CAN WE REALLY JUST... LEARN THE TRUTH LIKE THAT?!
がばっ
JOLT
THERE WAS NO DEDUCTION, NO HYPOTHESIZING— NOTHING!
WE DON'T NEED DEDUCTION.
WE JUST GOT AN EYE-WITNESS TESTIMONY FROM AN UNBIASED THIRD PARTY. WHAT BETTER WAY TO GET ALL THE FACTS?

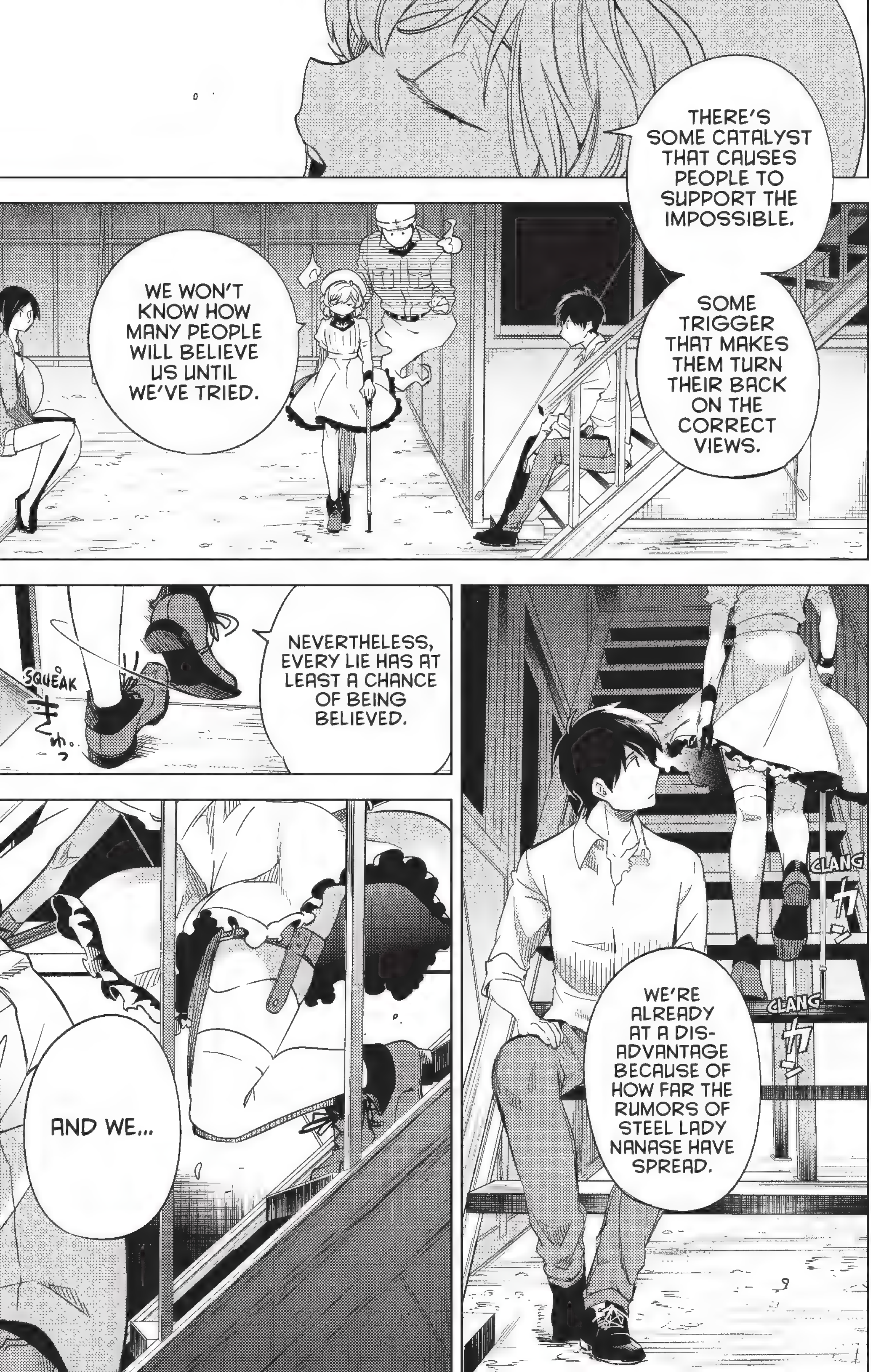

WHEN ALL IT TAKES IS A LITTLE INVESTIGATION,
WRACKING OUR BRAINS TO FIND A SOLUTION IS JUST A WASTE OF ENERGY.
A WASTE OF ENERGY.
WASTE OF ENERGY ?!
TH...
ZSH
THEN WHY DID I HAVE TO TELL YOU WHAT IT SAID IN THE POLICE REPORTS?!
THERE'S NO *MYSTERY* TO KARIN NANASE'S DEATH!
POINT
POINT
YOU KNOW THE WHOLE STORY, AND ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS ASK YOUR SUPERNATURAL FRIENDS!

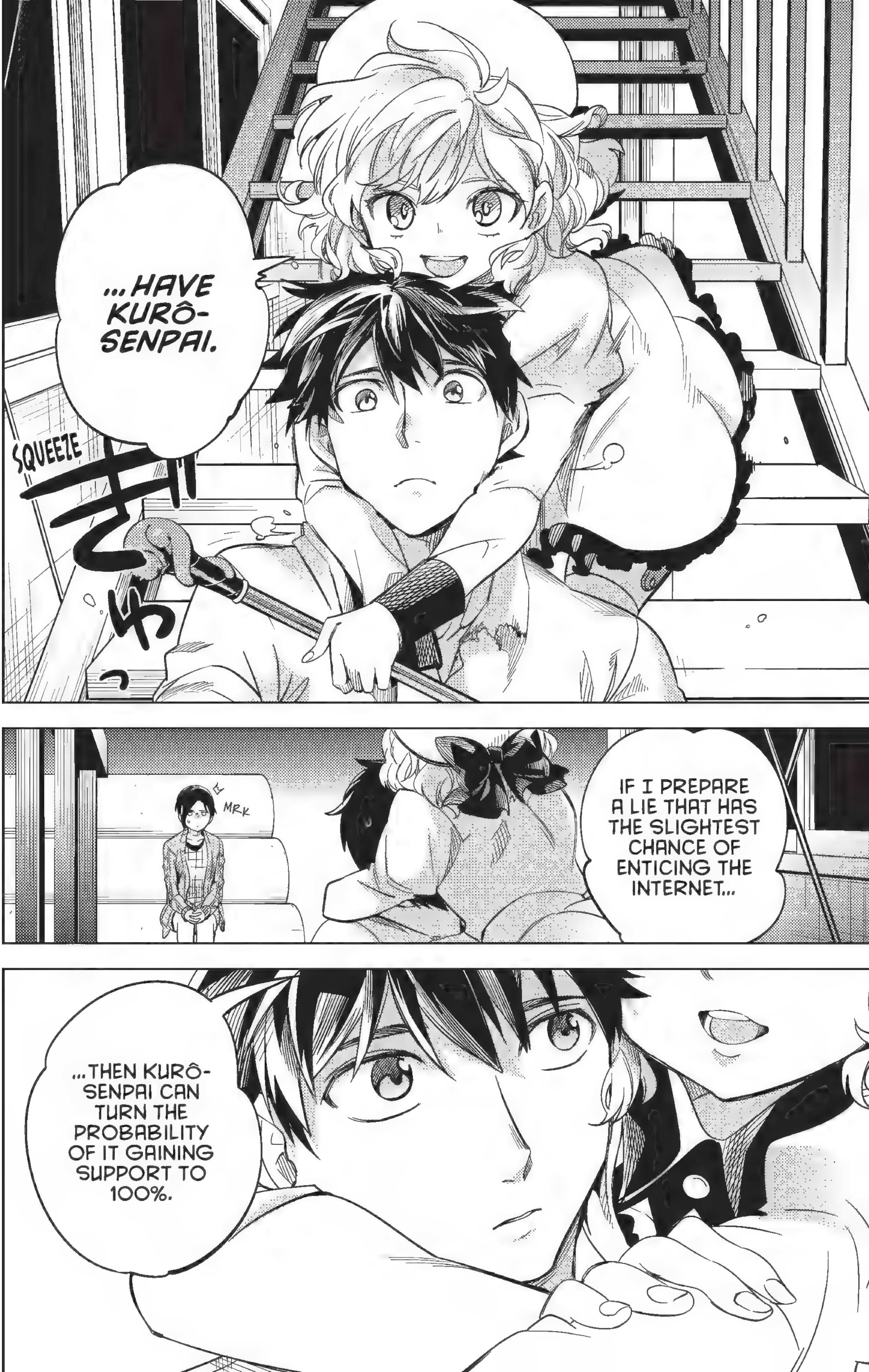

THE TRUTH IS IMPORTANT.
コッ
CLUNK
BUT KNOWING WHAT THE PUBLIC SEES AS TRUTH, AND WHAT CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN FROM THAT...
...IS IMPORTANT, TOO.
BECAUSE THOSE ARE THE CONCLUSIONS DRIVING THE PEOPLE ON THE INTERNET WHO FANTASIZE ABOUT STEEL LADY NANASE.
TRUTH
POLICE REPORT
WHAT THE PUBLIC KNOWS
ぱんっ
POW
WE CAN'T PRESENT ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF THAT TO THE PUBLIC.
INVENTED RUMORS GENERALLY ACCEPTED AS TRUTH
AND IF THE PUBLIC ACCEPTS CERTAIN INFORMATION AS TRUTH,
WE WILL USE IT, EVEN IF IT'S NOT THE ACTUAL TRUTH.

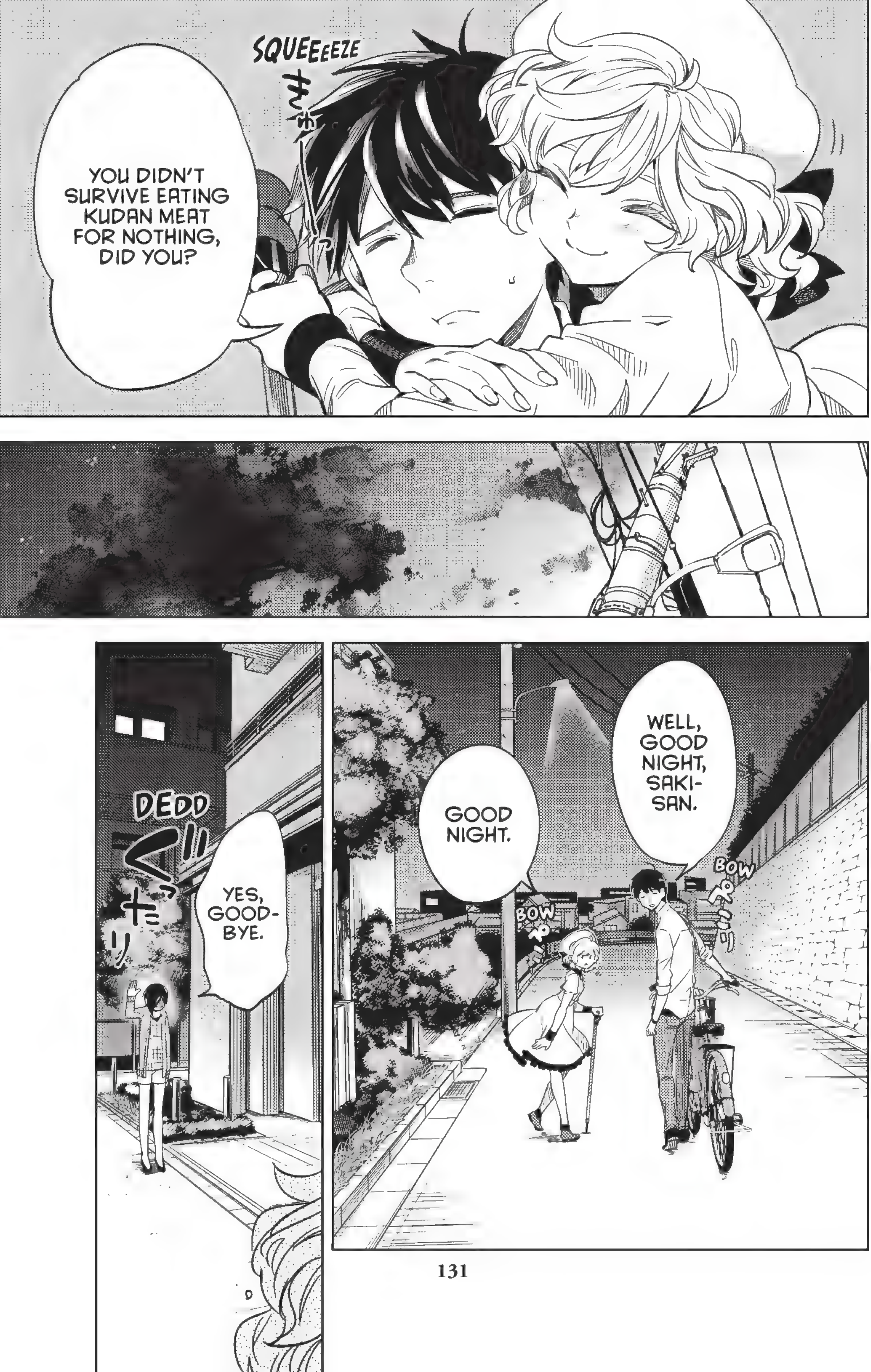

I AM A GODDESS OF WISDOM.
I WILL USE WHATEVER I CAN TO INVENT A FICTION...
...AND TO MAKE THAT FICTION CONVINCING.
I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU, MY LADY! I WILL LEARN FROM YOUR EXAMPLE AND USE THE PAIN OF MY FAILURE TO PROPEL ME FORWARD!
I'LL NEVER PASS ON TO THE AFTERLIFE IF I REMAIN A POWERLESS HAUNT!
WAH
YEAAAH
I WILL MAKE MYSELF STRONGER, SO THAT WHEN THIS BUILDING IS FINISHED, I CAN BE ITS GUARDIAN SPIRIT!

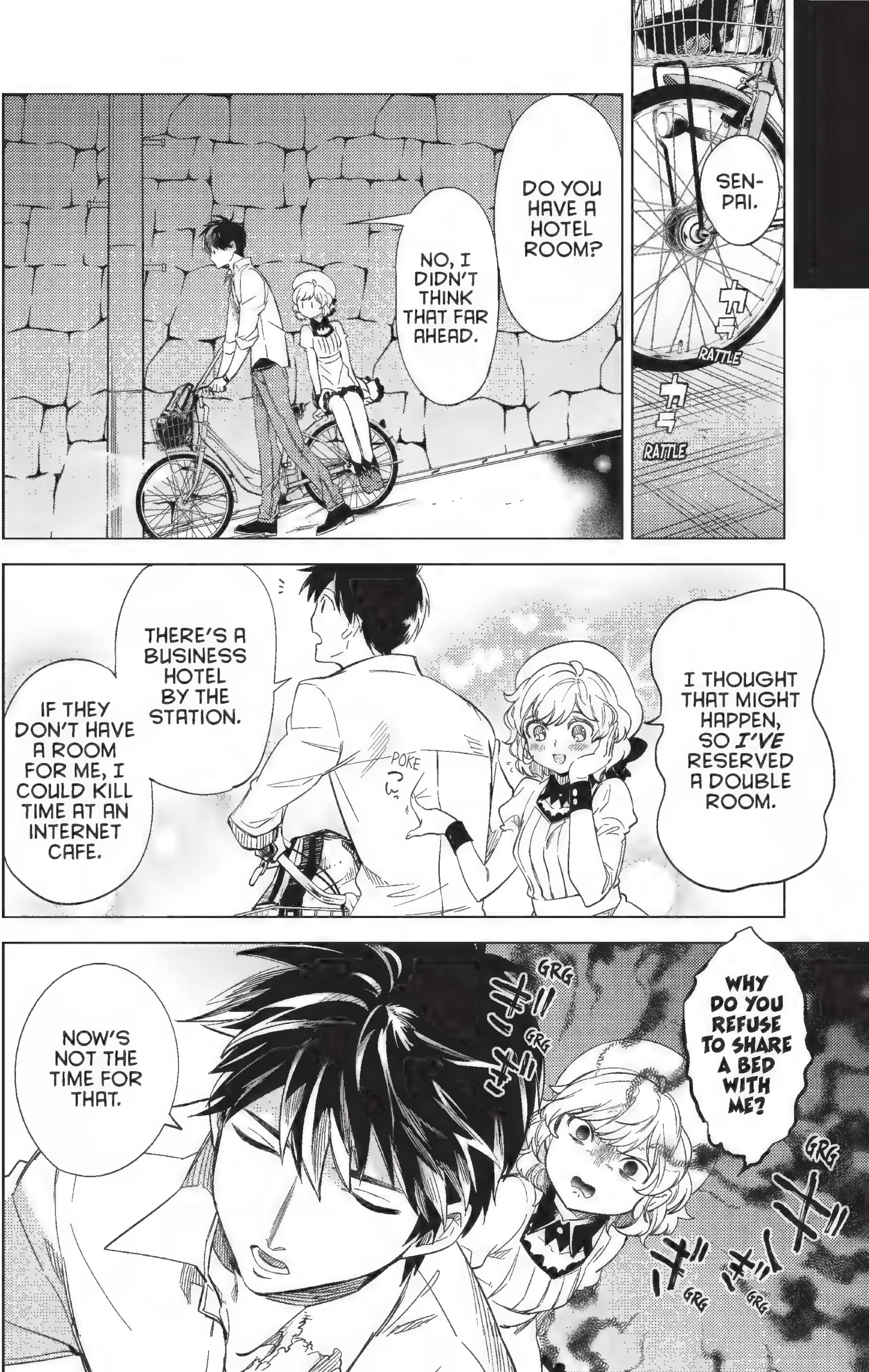

SWOOOOON
くら
あ
ああ
FWUMP
ぺたんっ
SUDDENLY, IT ALL SEEMS LIKE SUCH A HAREBRAINED SCHEME.
I MEAN, EVEN IF YOU DO MANAGE TO PRESENT AN APPEALING, WELL THOUGHT-OUT SOLUTION,
WHETHER OR NOT PEOPLE ON THE INTERNET ACCEPT IT IS STILL A MATTER OF LUCK.
THIS IS A SPACE WHERE AN UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF PEOPLE CAN WRITE WHATEVER THEY WANT—CAN YOU REALLY MOLD IT TO YOUR WILL?

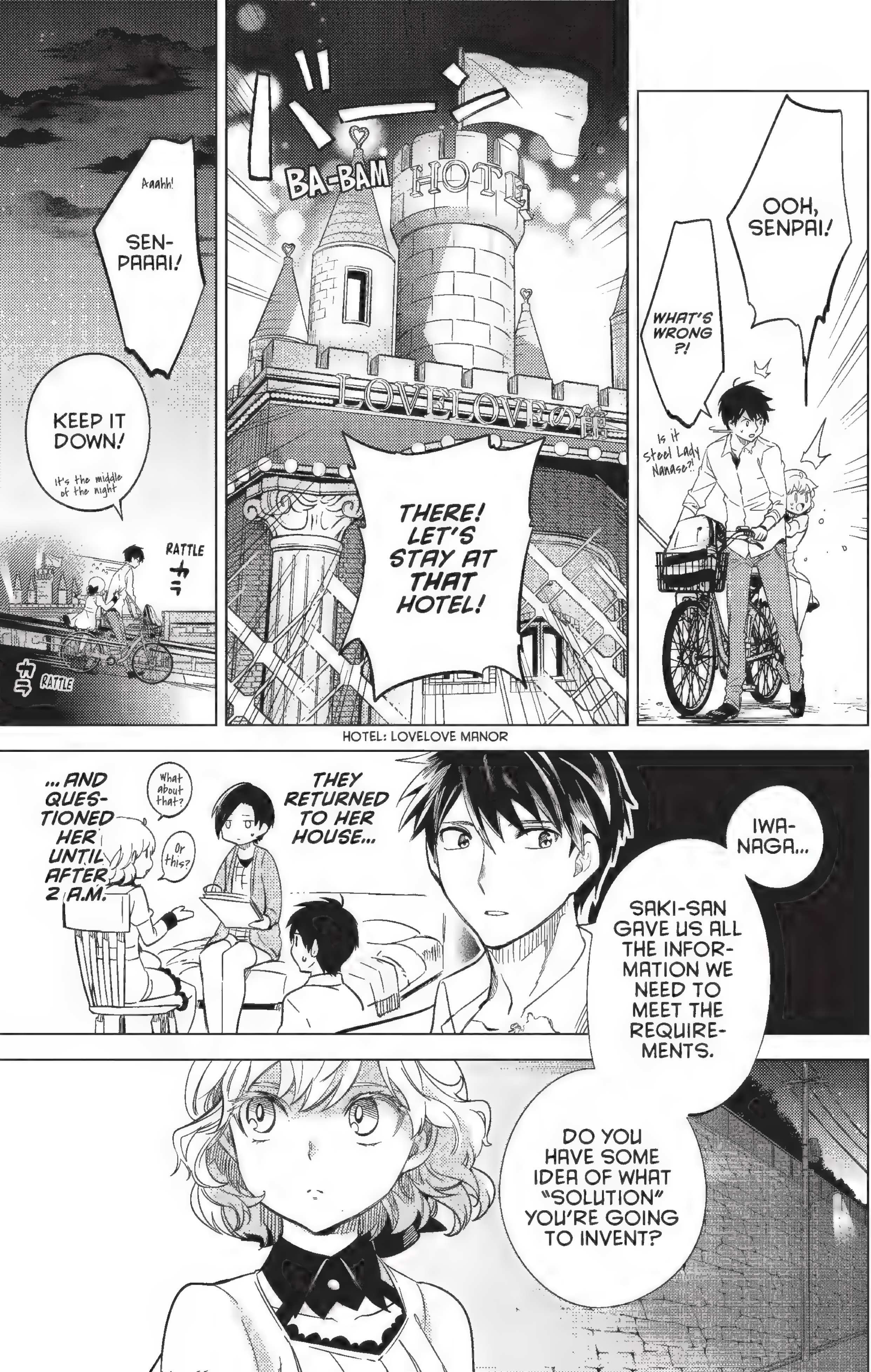

PEOPLE DON'T ALWAYS WANT TO BE LOGICAL.
SOME PEOPLE MAY APPROVE OF A REALISTIC EXPLANATION TO A MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE,
BUT OTHERS WON'T APPRECIATE YOU RUINING THEIR FUN—THEY'LL JUST KEEP ON BELIEVING IN GHOSTS.
AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THEY BALANCE OUT. CAN YOUR LIE HAVE ANY POWER OVER THEM?
CLACK
CLACK
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE TO GET PEOPLE'S THOUGHT PROCESSES ALL TO FLOW IN ONE DIRECTION.
TURN THAT AROUND, AND THAT'S WHY IT'S NOT EASY FOR IMAGINARY MONSTERS TO COME INTO BEING.

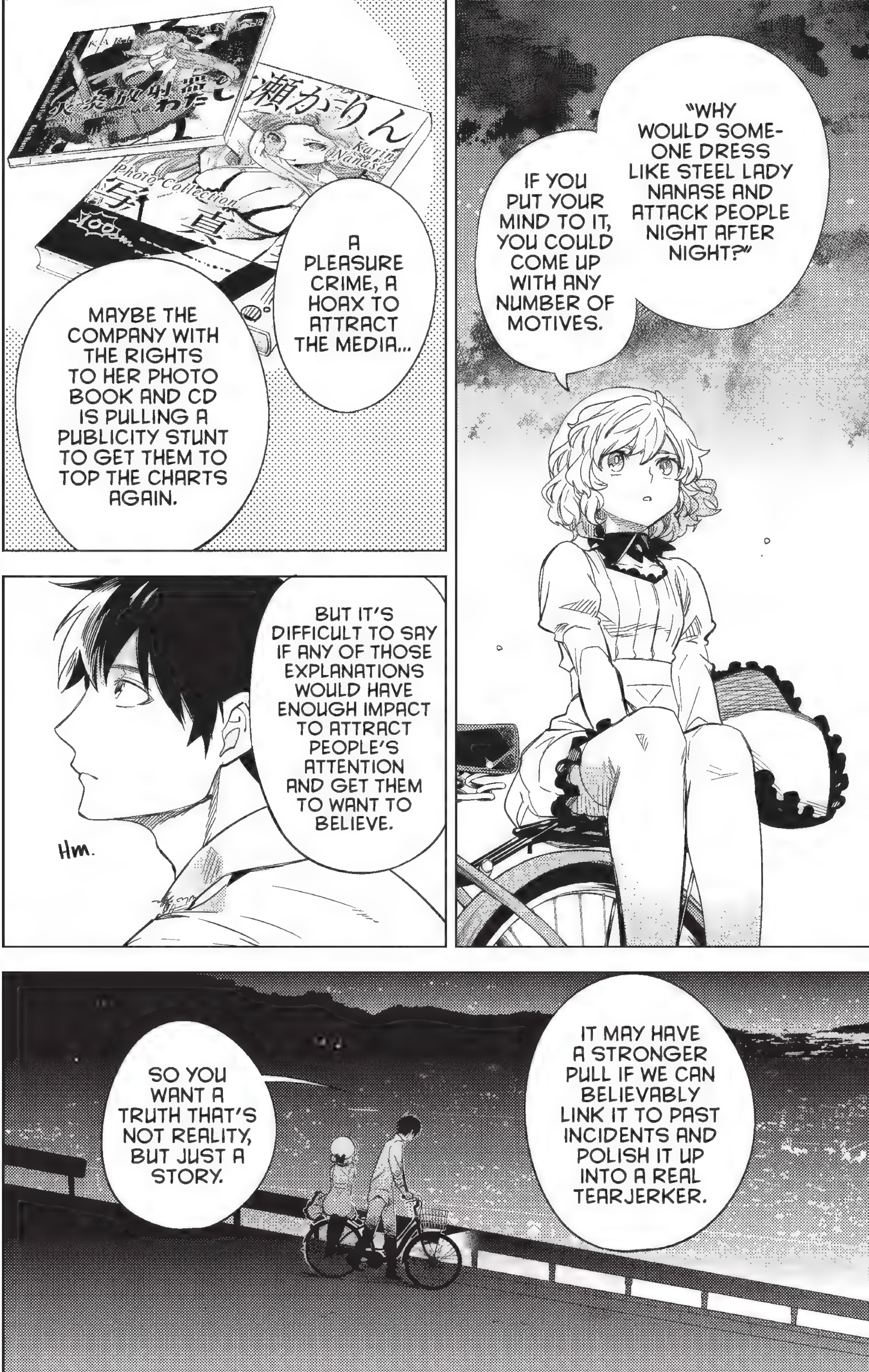

THERE'S SOME CATALYST THAT CAUSES PEOPLE TO SUPPORT THE IMPOSSIBLE.
SOME TRIGGER THAT MAKES THEM TURN THEIR BACK ON THE CORRECT VIEWS.
WE WON'T KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE US UNTIL WE'VE TRIED.
CLANG
カッ
CLANG
カッ
WE'RE ALREADY AT A DISADVANTAGE BECAUSE OF HOW FAR THE RUMORS OF STEEL LADY NANASE HAVE SPREAD.
NEVERTHELESS, EVERY LIE HAS AT LEAST A CHANCE OF BEING BELIEVED.
SQUEAK
きゅっ
AND WE...

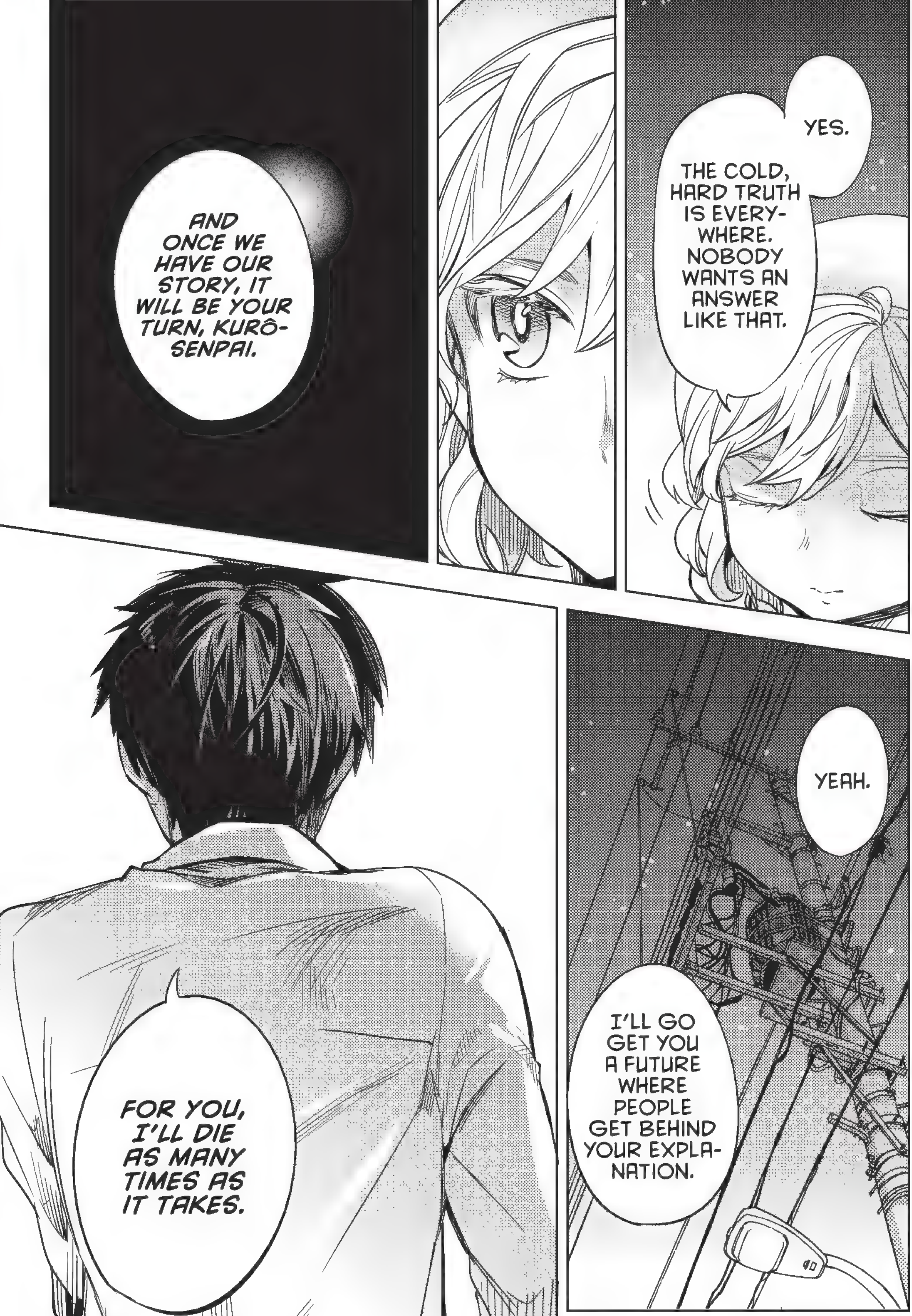

...HAVE KURÔ-SENPAI.
SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ
IF I PREPARE A LIE THAT HAS THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE OF ENTICING THE INTERNET...
MRK
...THEN KURÔ-SENPAI CAN TURN THE PROBABILITY OF IT GAINING SUPPORT TO 100%.

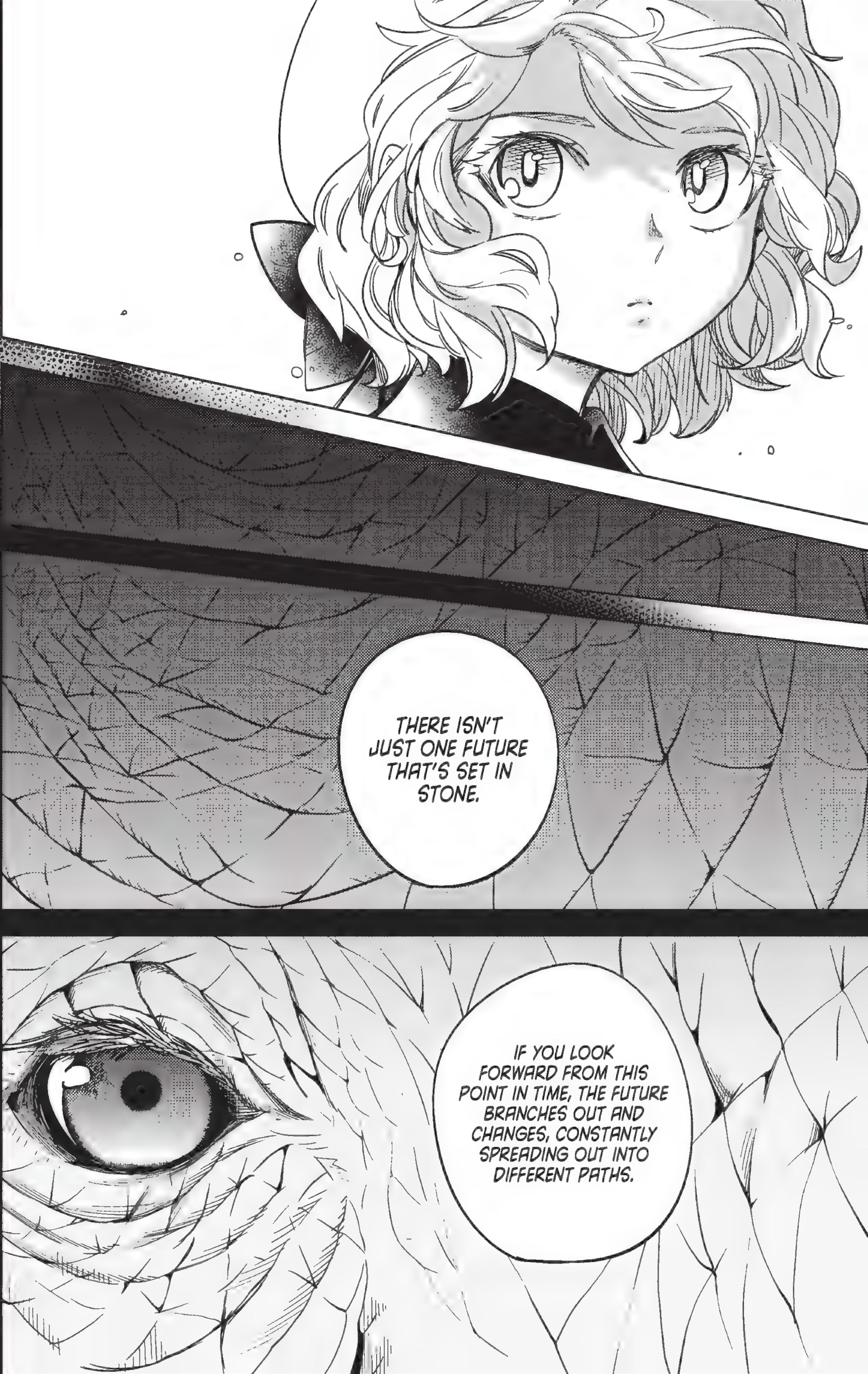

SQUEEEEZE
YOU DIDN'T SURVIVE EATING KUDAN MEAT FOR NOTHING, DID YOU?
WELL, GOOD NIGHT, SAKI-SAN.
BOW
GOOD NIGHT.
BOW
DEDD
YES, GOOD-BYE.

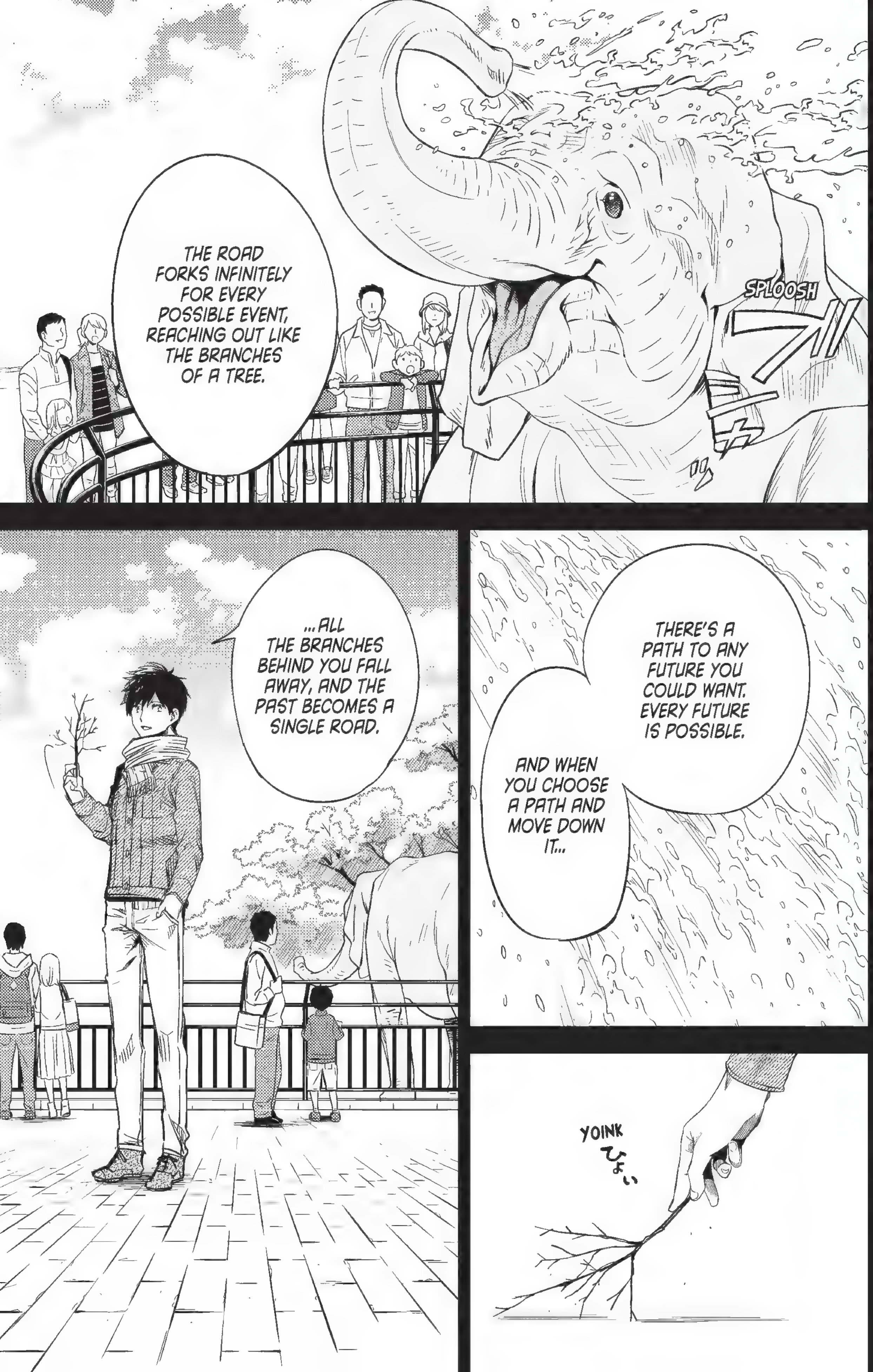

SEN-PAI.
RATTLE
RATTLE
DO YOU HAVE A HOTEL ROOM?
NO, I DIDN'T THINK THAT FAR AHEAD.
I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT HAPPEN, SO *I'VE* RESERVED A DOUBLE ROOM.
POKE
THERE'S A BUSINESS HOTEL BY THE STATION.
IF THEY DON'T HAVE A ROOM FOR ME, I COULD KILL TIME AT AN INTERNET CAFE.
WHY DO YOU REFUSE TO SHARE A BED WITH ME?
GRG
GRG
GRG
GRG
GRG
NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR THAT.

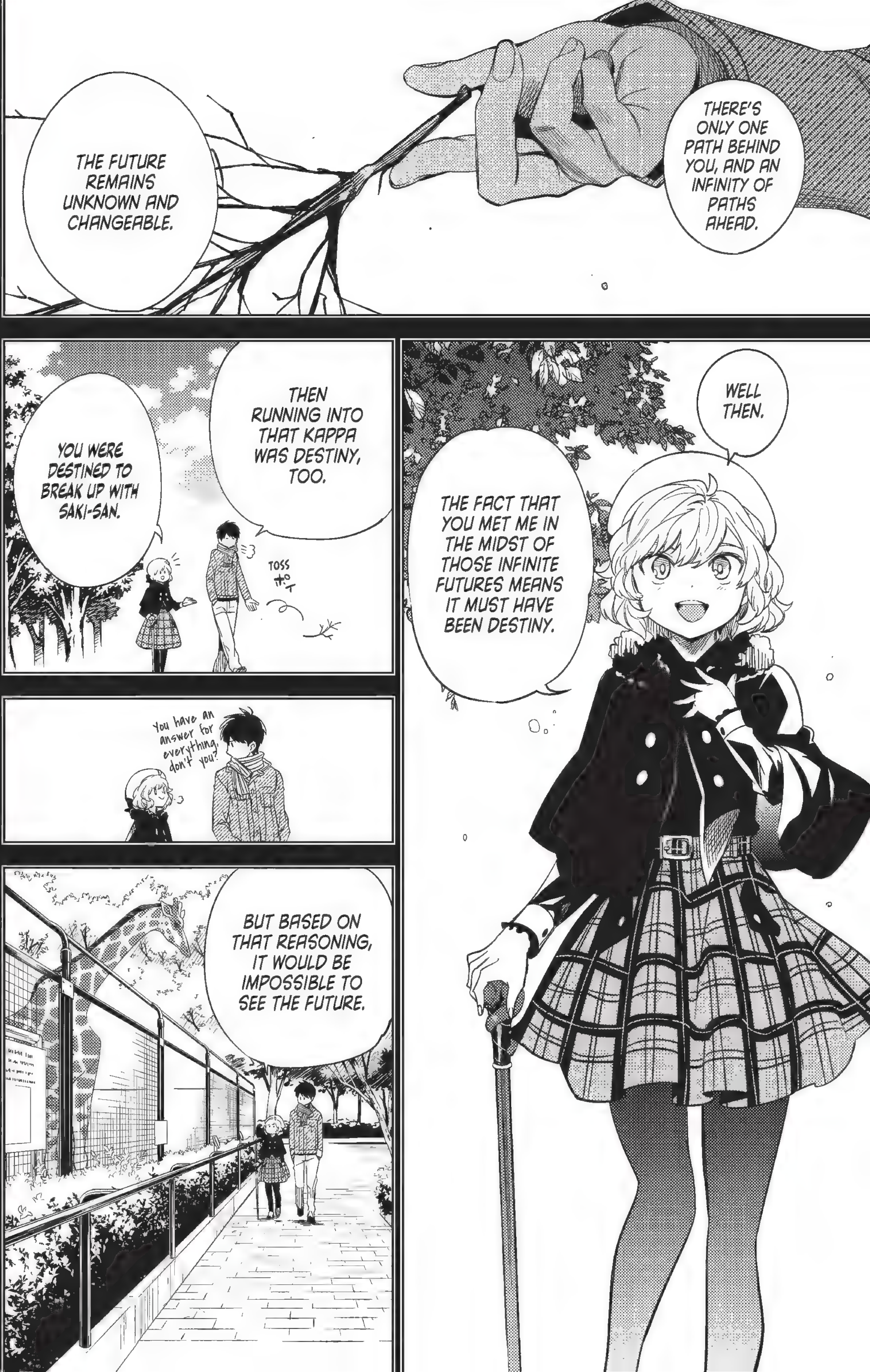

OOH, SENPAI!
WHAT'S WRONG ?!
Is it Steel Lady Nanase?!
BA-BAM
HOTEL
LOVELOVEの館
THERE! LET'S STAY AT THAT HOTEL!
Aaahh! SEN-PAAAI!
KEEP IT DOWN! It's the middle of the night
RATTLE カラ
カラ RATTLE
HOTEL: LOVELOVE MANOR
IWA-NAGA...
SAKI-SAN GAVE US ALL THE INFORMATION WE NEED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS.
THEY RETURNED TO HER HOUSE...
What about that?
Or this?
...AND QUESTIONED HER UNTIL AFTER 2 A.M.
DO YOU HAVE SOME IDEA OF WHAT "SOLUTION" YOU'RE GOING TO INVENT?

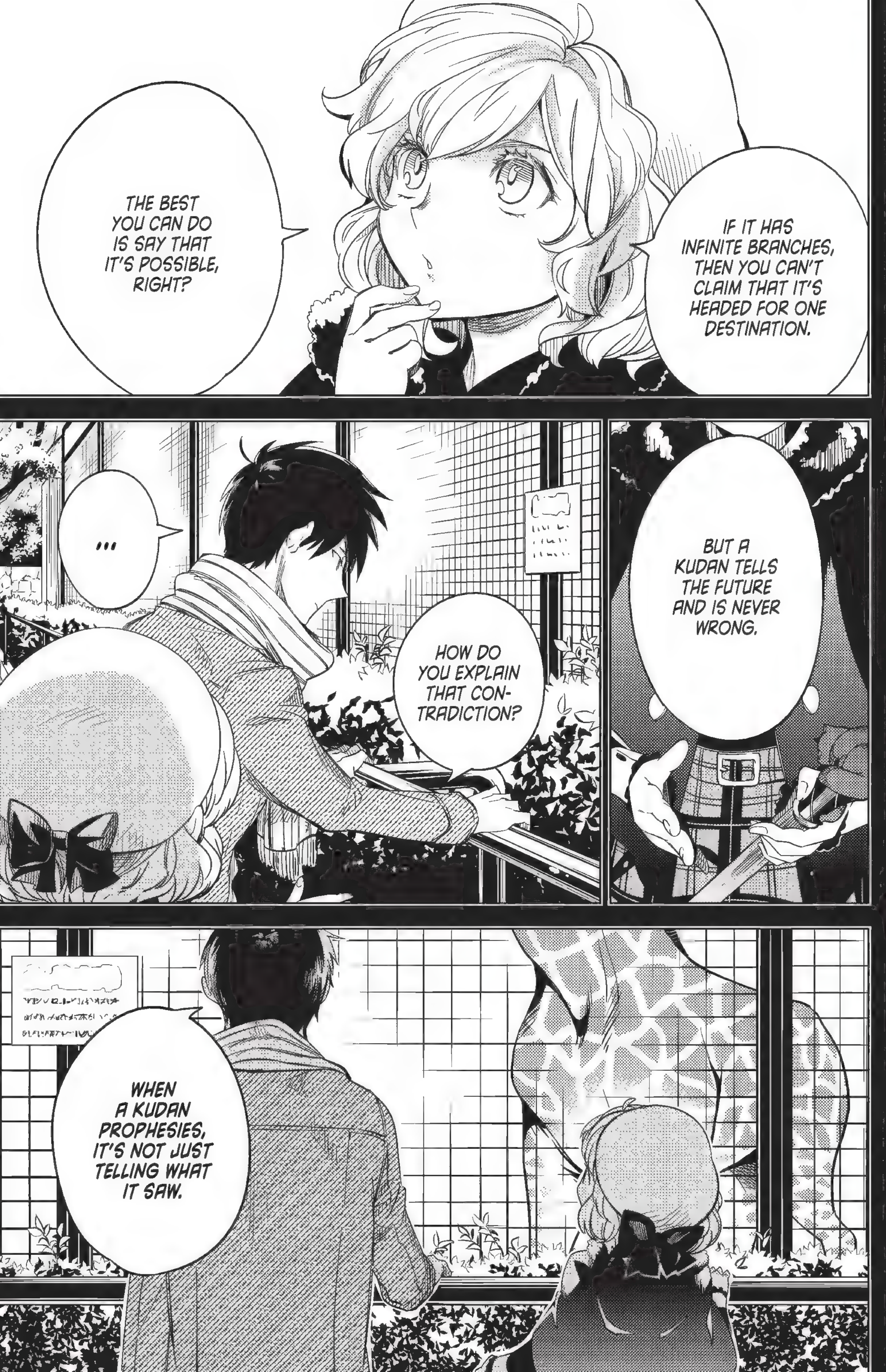

"WHY WOULD SOME-ONE DRESS LIKE STEEL LADY NANASE AND ATTACK PEOPLE NIGHT AFTER NIGHT?"
IF YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT, YOU COULD COME UP WITH ANY NUMBER OF MOTIVES.
瀬かりん
Karin Nanase
Photo Collection
写真
A PLEASURE CRIME, A HOAX TO ATTRACT THE MEDIA...
MAYBE THE COMPANY WITH THE RIGHTS TO HER PHOTO BOOK AND CD IS PULLING A PUBLICITY STUNT TO GET THEM TO TOP THE CHARTS AGAIN.
BUT IT'S DIFFICULT TO SAY IF ANY OF THOSE EXPLANATIONS WOULD HAVE ENOUGH IMPACT TO ATTRACT PEOPLE'S ATTENTION AND GET THEM TO WANT TO BELIEVE.
Hm.
IT MAY HAVE A STRONGER PULL IF WE CAN BELIEVABLY LINK IT TO PAST INCIDENTS AND POLISH IT UP INTO A REAL TEARJERKER.
SO YOU WANT A TRUTH THAT'S NOT REALITY, BUT JUST A STORY.

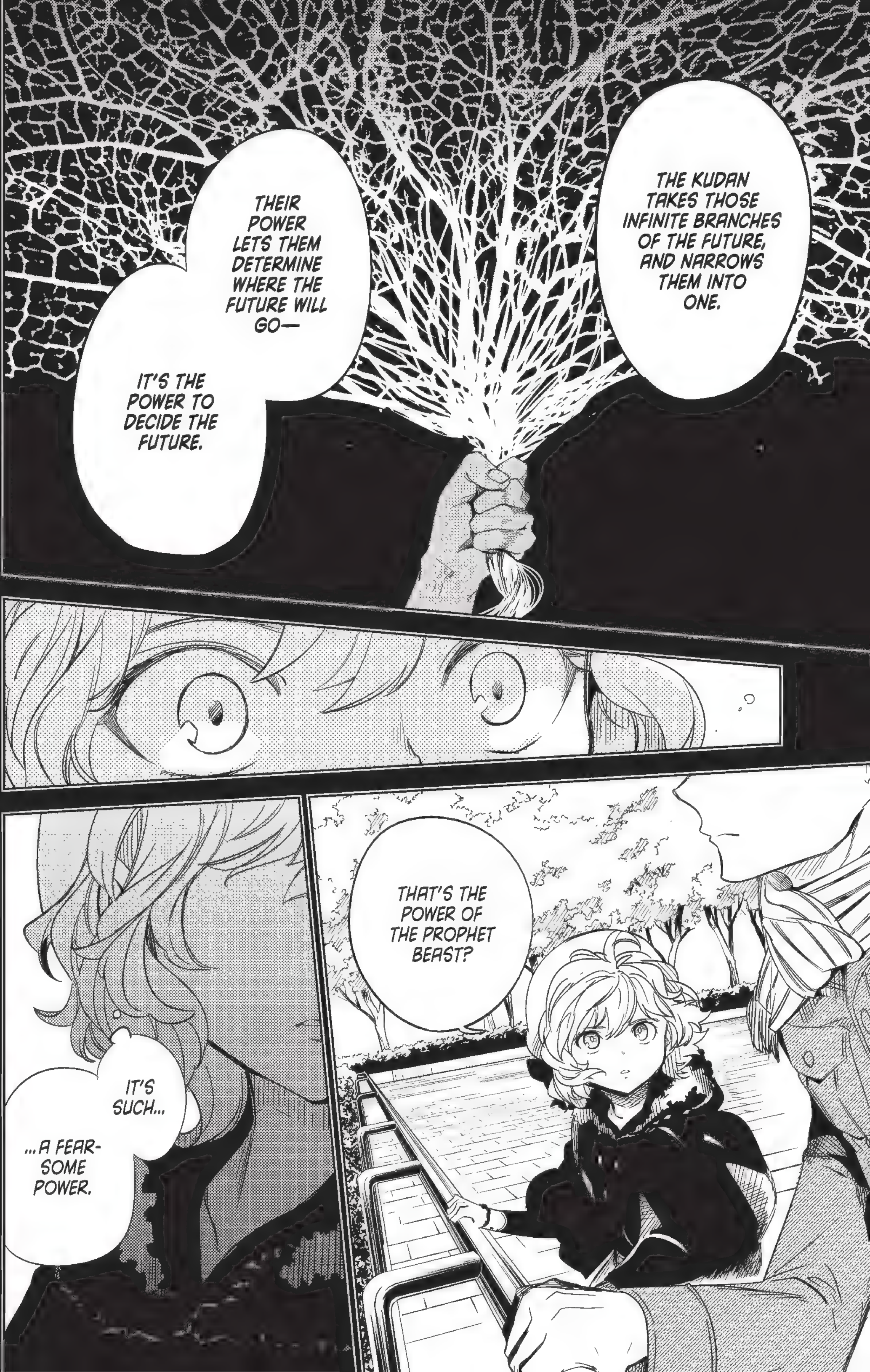

YES.
THE COLD, HARD TRUTH IS EVERYWHERE. NOBODY WANTS AN ANSWER LIKE THAT.
AND ONCE WE HAVE OUR STORY, IT WILL BE YOUR TURN, KURÔ-SENPAI.
YEAH.
I'LL GO GET YOU A FUTURE WHERE PEOPLE GET BEHIND YOUR EXPLANATION.
FOR YOU, I'LL DIE AS MANY TIMES AS IT TAKES.

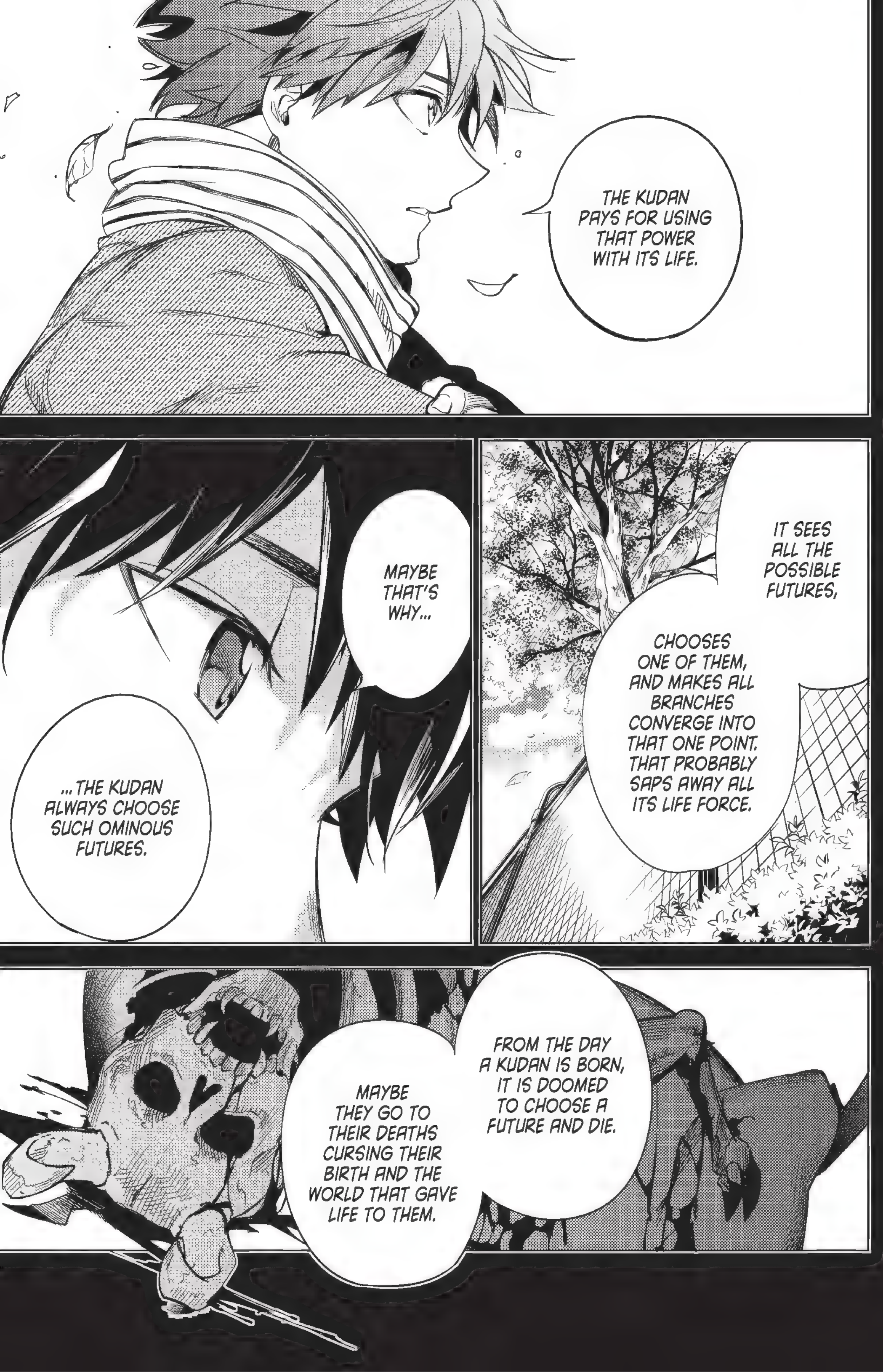

THERE ISN'T JUST ONE FUTURE THAT'S SET IN STONE.
IF YOU LOOK FORWARD FROM THIS POINT IN TIME, THE FUTURE BRANCHES OUT AND CHANGES, CONSTANTLY SPREADING OUT INTO DIFFERENT PATHS.

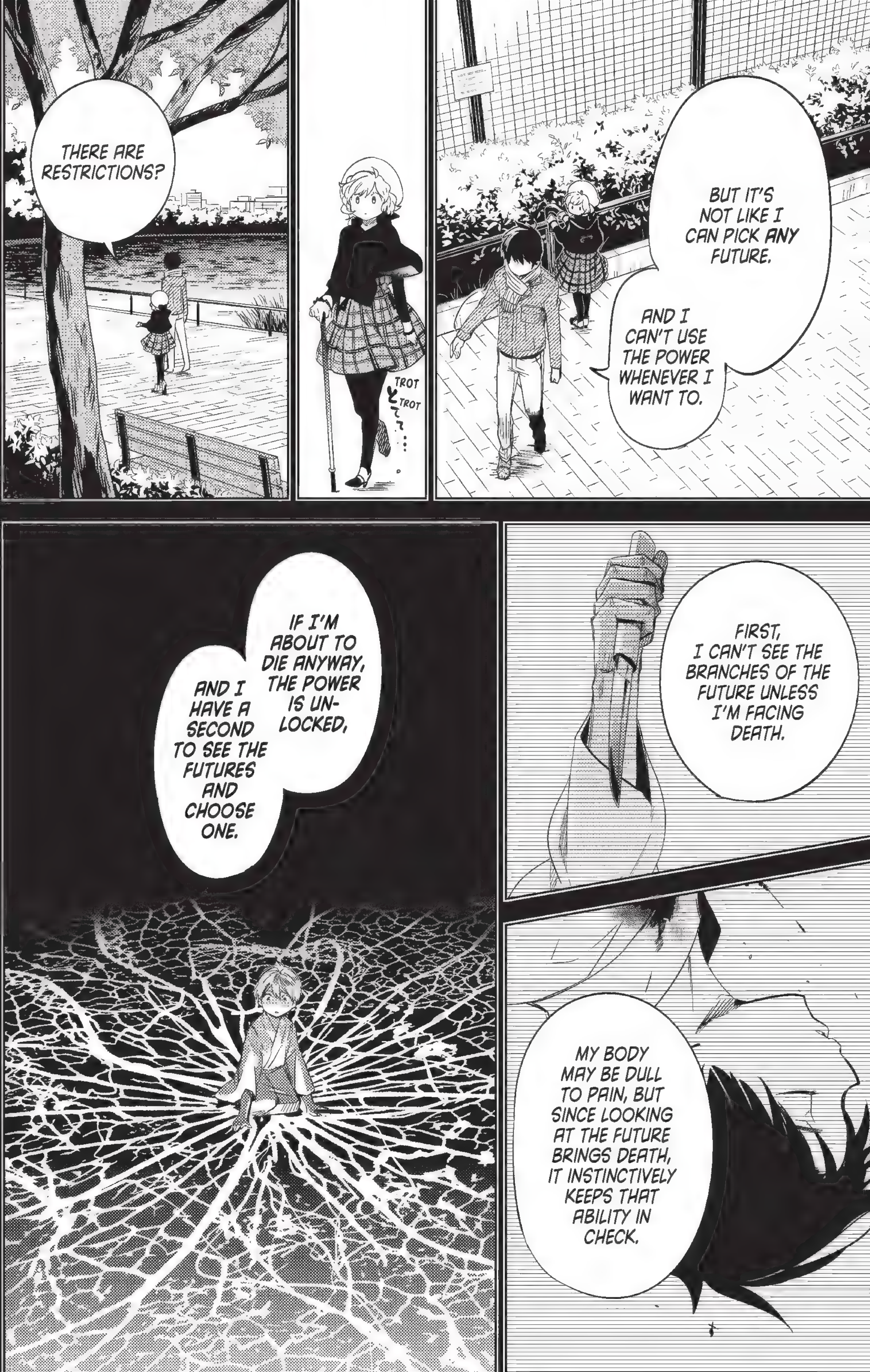

THE ROAD FORKS INFINITELY FOR EVERY POSSIBLE EVENT, REACHING OUT LIKE THE BRANCHES OF A TREE.
SPLOOSH
THERE'S A PATH TO ANY FUTURE YOU COULD WANT. EVERY FUTURE IS POSSIBLE.
AND WHEN YOU CHOOSE A PATH AND MOVE DOWN IT...
...ALL THE BRANCHES BEHIND YOU FALL AWAY, AND THE PAST BECOMES A SINGLE ROAD.
YOINK
ひょい

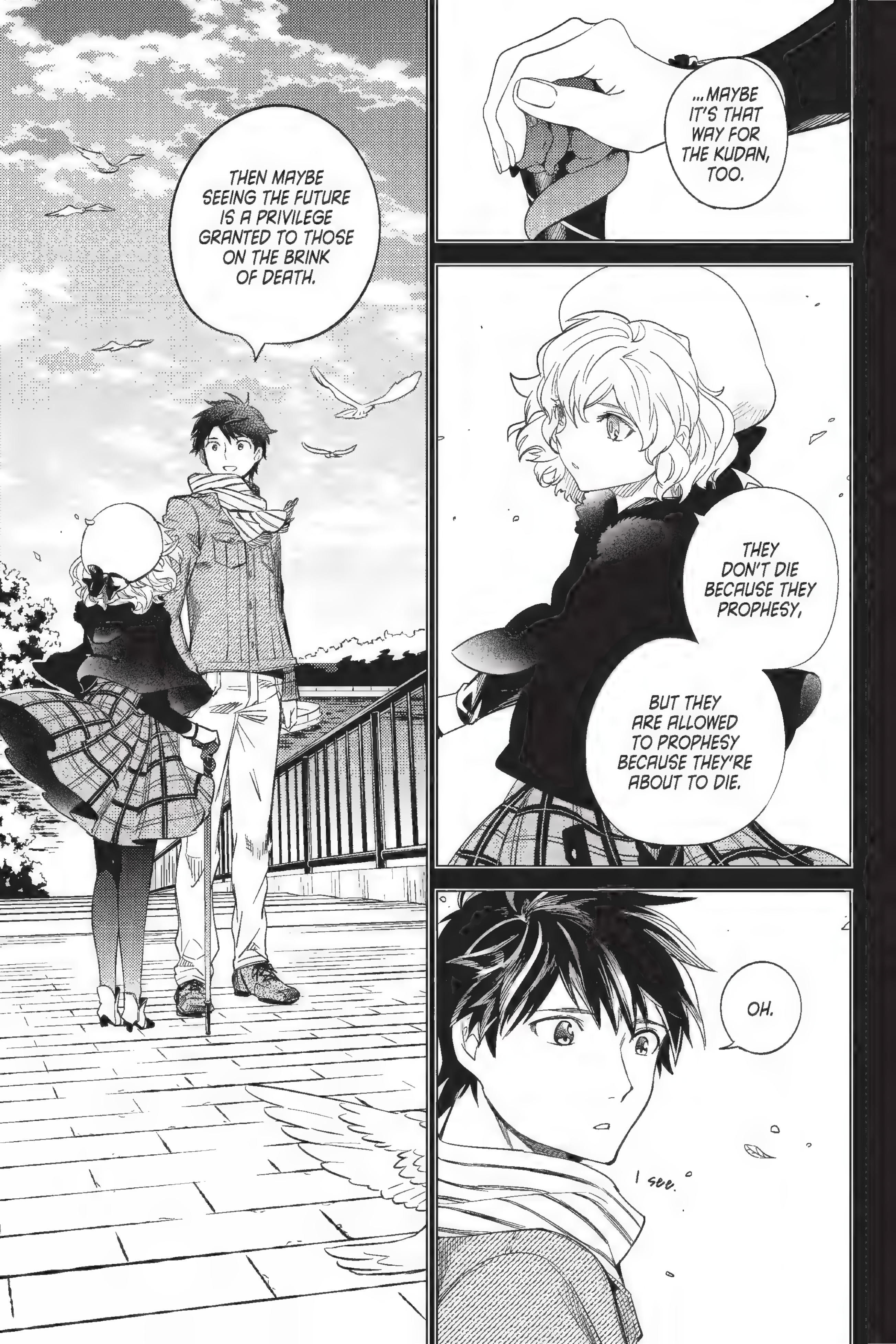

THERE'S ONLY ONE PATH BEHIND YOU, AND AN INFINITY OF PATHS AHEAD.
THE FUTURE REMAINS UNKNOWN AND CHANGEABLE.
WELL THEN.
THE FACT THAT YOU MET ME IN THE MIDST OF THOSE INFINITE FUTURES MEANS IT MUST HAVE BEEN DESTINY.
THEN RUNNING INTO THAT KAPPA WAS DESTINY, TOO.
YOU WERE DESTINED TO BREAK UP WITH SAKI-SAN.
TOSS
ポイ
You have an answer for everything, don't you?
BUT BASED ON THAT REASONING, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE THE FUTURE.

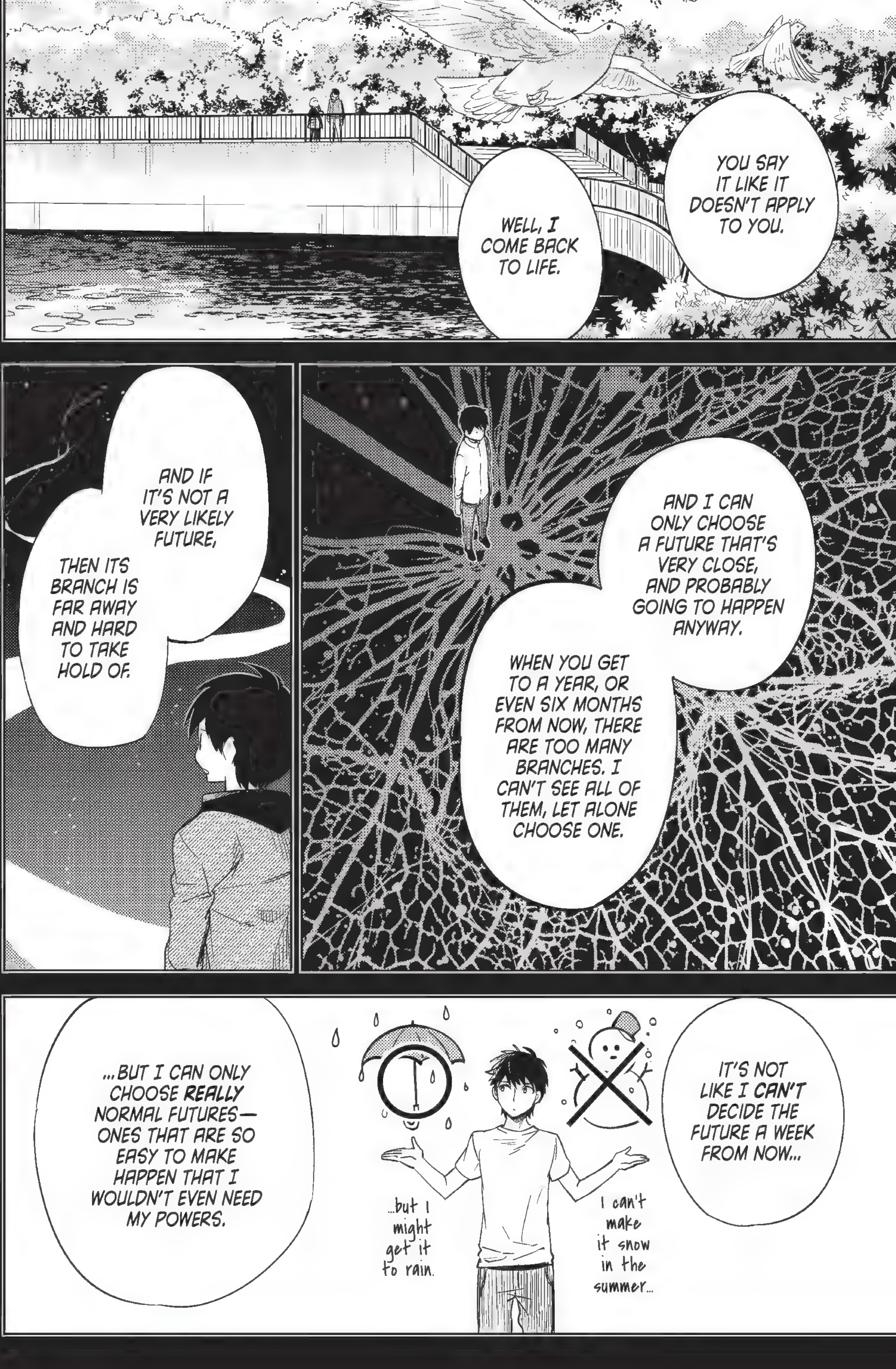

IF IT HAS INFINITE BRANCHES, THEN YOU CAN'T CLAIM THAT IT'S HEADED FOR ONE DESTINATION.
THE BEST YOU CAN DO IS SAY THAT IT'S POSSIBLE, RIGHT?
BUT A KUDAN TELLS THE FUTURE AND IS NEVER WRONG.
HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THAT CONTRADICTION?
...
WHEN A KUDAN PROPHESIES, IT'S NOT JUST TELLING WHAT IT SAW.

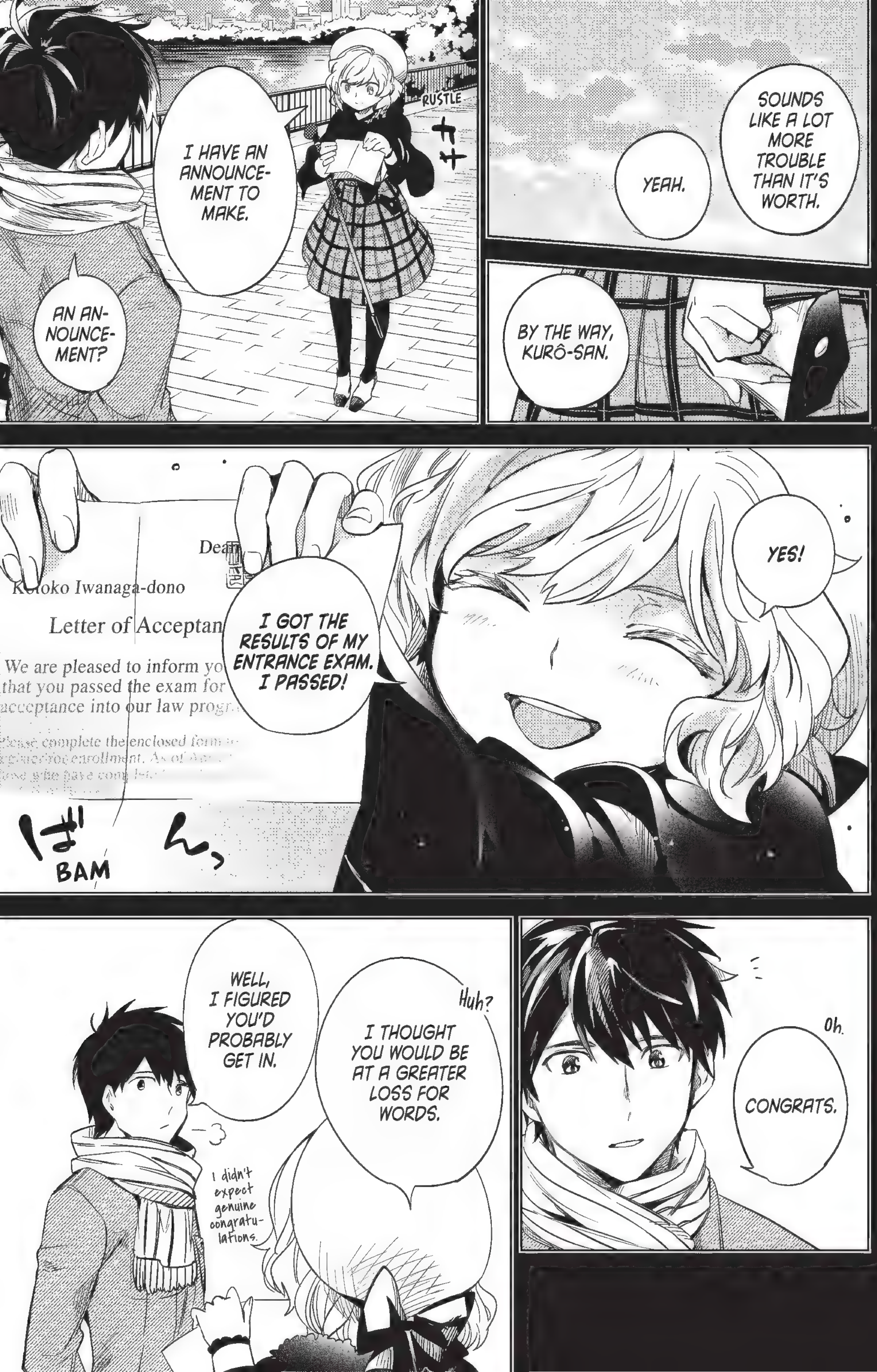

THE KUDAN TAKES THOSE INFINITE BRANCHES OF THE FUTURE, AND NARROWS THEM INTO ONE.
THEIR POWER LETS THEM DETERMINE WHERE THE FUTURE WILL GO—
IT'S THE POWER TO DECIDE THE FUTURE.
THAT'S THE POWER OF THE PROPHET BEAST?
IT'S SUCH...
...A FEARSOME POWER.

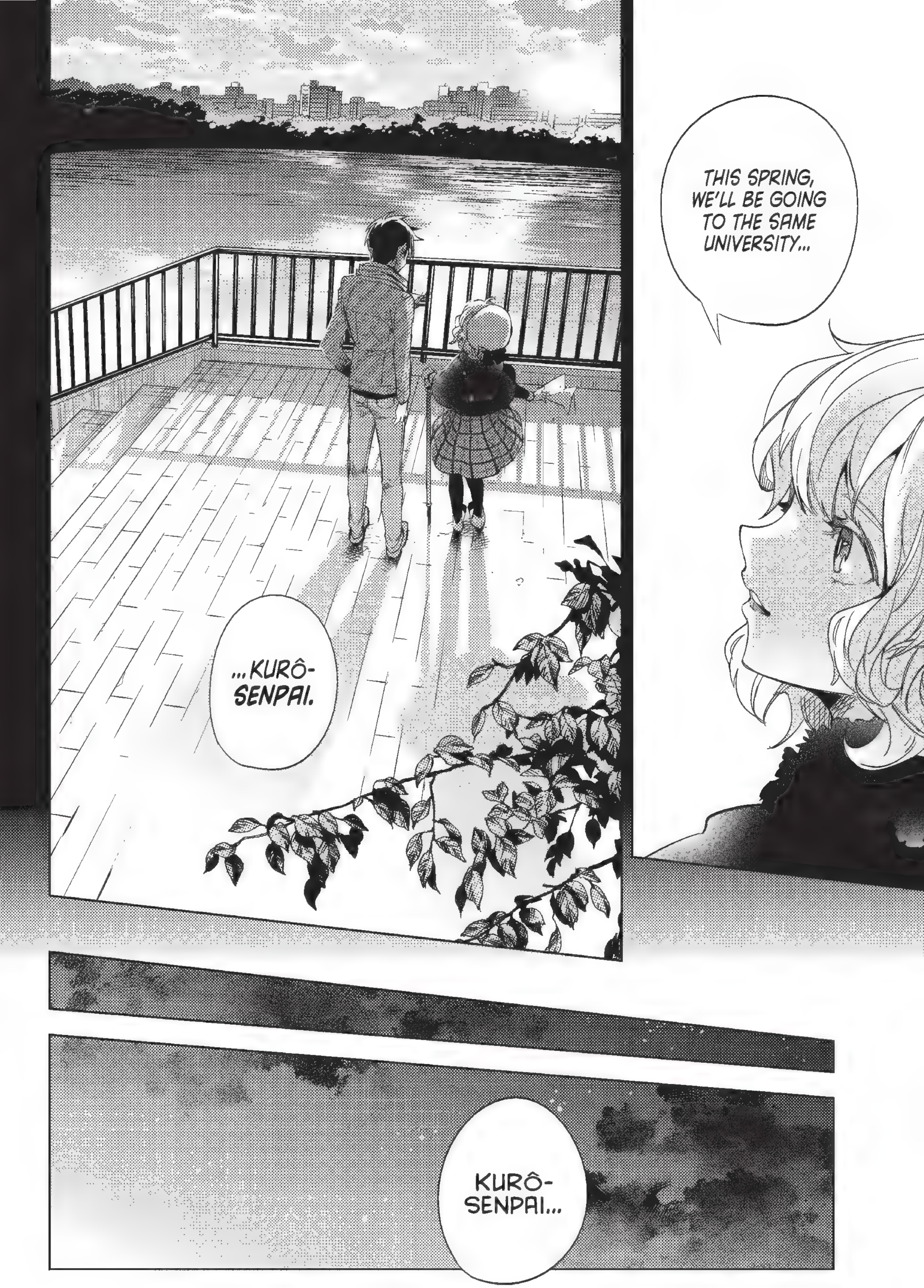

THE KUDAN PAYS FOR USING THAT POWER WITH ITS LIFE.
IT SEES ALL THE POSSIBLE FUTURES,
CHOOSES ONE OF THEM, AND MAKES ALL BRANCHES CONVERGE INTO THAT ONE POINT. THAT PROBABLY SAPS AWAY ALL ITS LIFE FORCE.
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...
...THE KUDAN ALWAYS CHOOSE SUCH OMINOUS FUTURES.
FROM THE DAY A KUDAN IS BORN, IT IS DOOMED TO CHOOSE A FUTURE AND DIE.
MAYBE THEY GO TO THEIR DEATHS CURSING THEIR BIRTH AND THE WORLD THAT GAVE LIFE TO THEM.

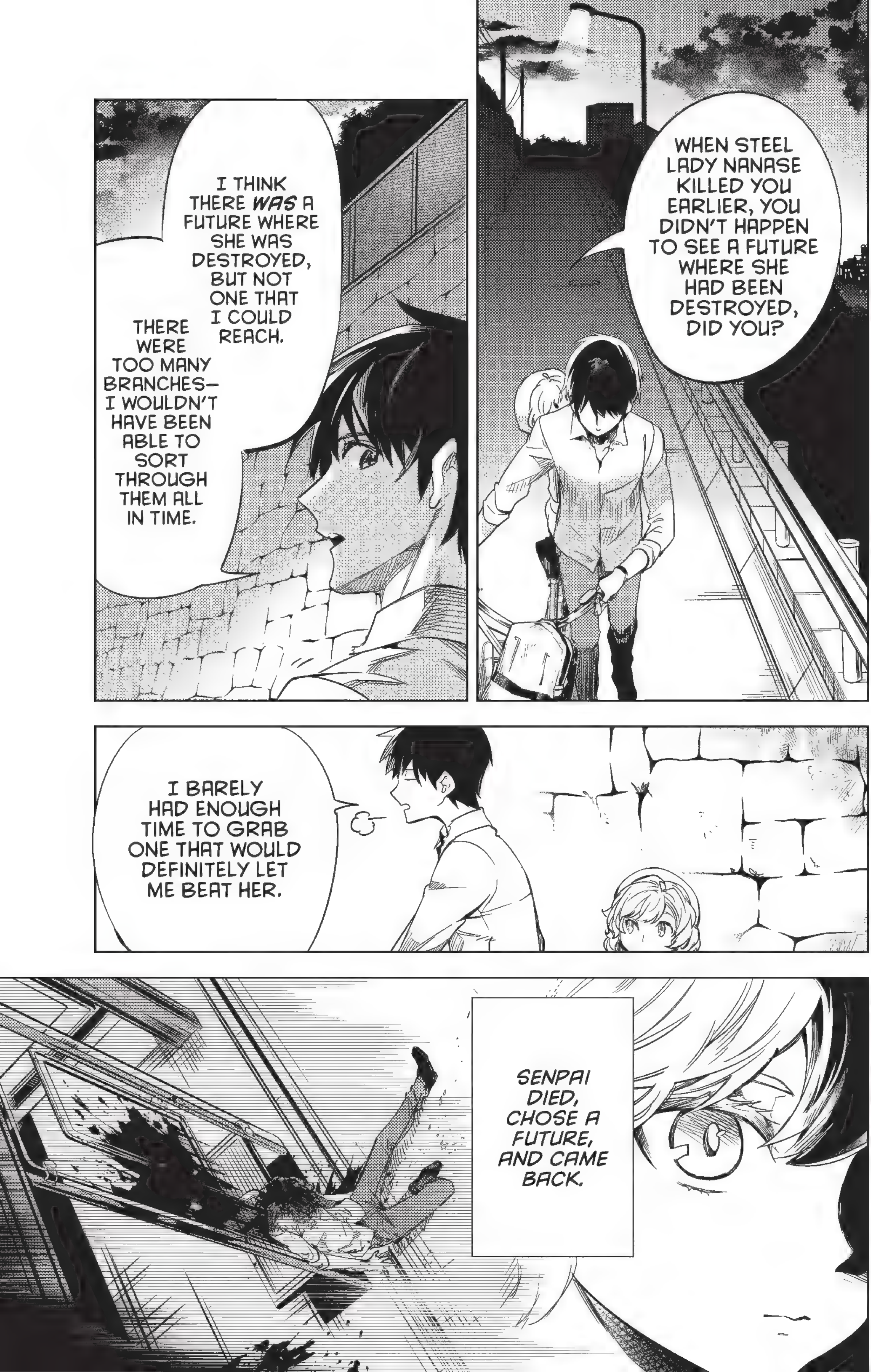

BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN PICK ANY FUTURE.
AND I CAN'T USE THE POWER WHENEVER I WANT TO.
TROT TROT
THERE ARE RESTRICTIONS?
FIRST, I CAN'T SEE THE BRANCHES OF THE FUTURE UNLESS I'M FACING DEATH.
MY BODY MAY BE DULL TO PAIN, BUT SINCE LOOKING AT THE FUTURE BRINGS DEATH, IT INSTINCTIVELY KEEPS THAT ABILITY IN CHECK.
IF I'M ABOUT TO DIE ANYWAY, THE POWER IS UNLOCKED,
AND I HAVE A SECOND TO SEE THE FUTURES AND CHOOSE ONE.

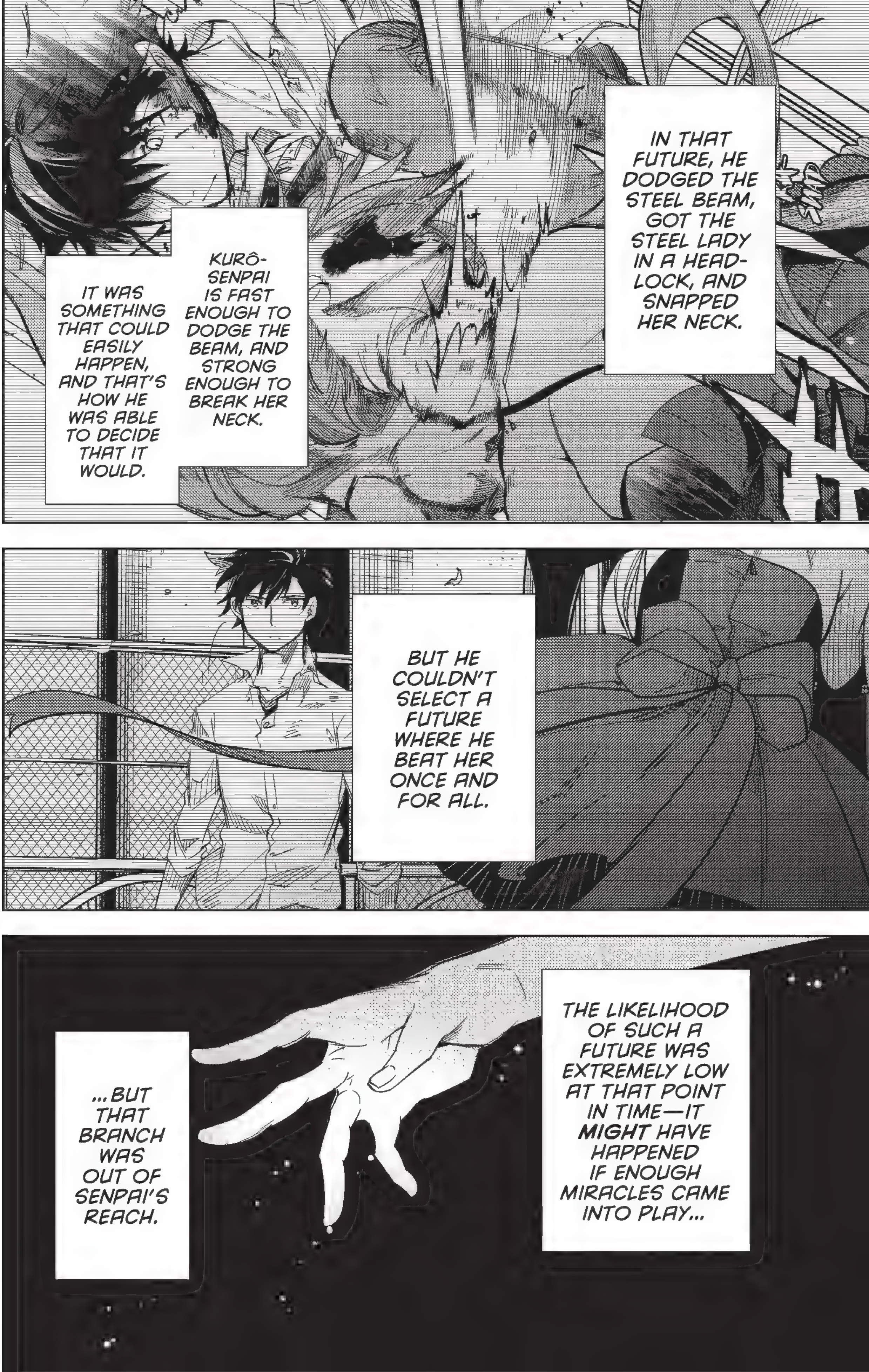

...MAYBE IT'S THAT WAY FOR THE KUDAN, TOO.
THEY DON'T DIE BECAUSE THEY PROPHESY,
BUT THEY ARE ALLOWED TO PROPHESY BECAUSE THEY'RE ABOUT TO DIE.
OH.
I see.
THEN MAYBE SEEING THE FUTURE IS A PRIVILEGE GRANTED TO THOSE ON THE BRINK OF DEATH.

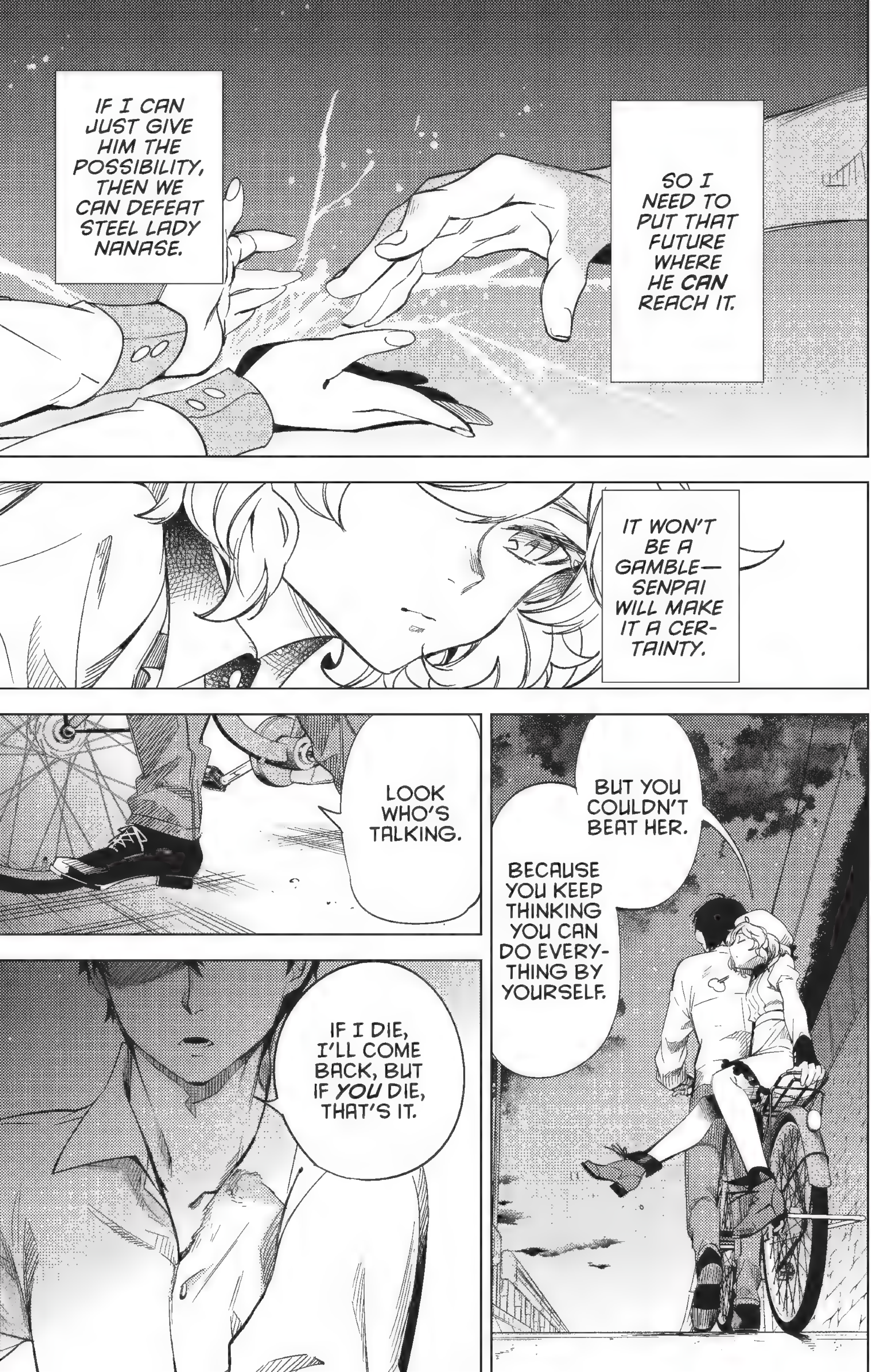

YOU SAY IT LIKE IT DOESN'T APPLY TO YOU.
WELL, I COME BACK TO LIFE.
AND I CAN ONLY CHOOSE A FUTURE THAT'S VERY CLOSE, AND PROBABLY GOING TO HAPPEN ANYWAY.
WHEN YOU GET TO A YEAR, OR EVEN SIX MONTHS FROM NOW, THERE ARE TOO MANY BRANCHES. I CAN'T SEE ALL OF THEM, LET ALONE CHOOSE ONE.
AND IF IT'S NOT A VERY LIKELY FUTURE,
THEN ITS BRANCH IS FAR AWAY AND HARD TO TAKE HOLD OF.
IT'S NOT LIKE I **CAN'T** DECIDE THE FUTURE A WEEK FROM NOW...
I can't make it snow in the summer...
...but I might get it to rain.
...BUT I CAN ONLY CHOOSE **REALLY** NORMAL FUTURES—ONES THAT ARE SO EASY TO MAKE HAPPEN THAT I WOULDN'T EVEN NEED MY POWERS.

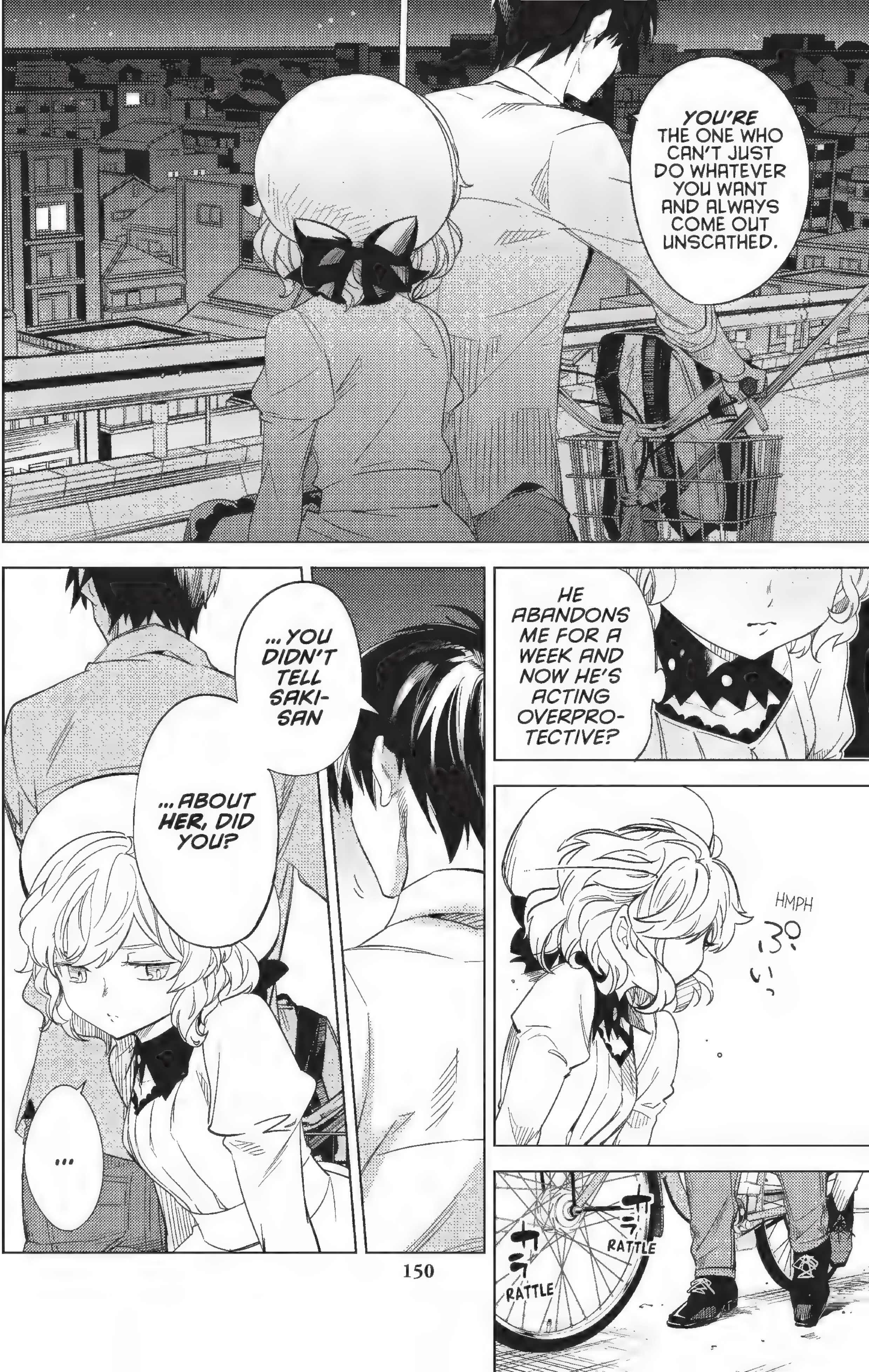

SOUNDS LIKE A LOT MORE TROUBLE THAN IT'S WORTH.
YEAH.
BY THE WAY, KURÔ-SAN.
RUSTLE
I HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE.
AN ANNOUNCEMENT?
YES!
I GOT THE RESULTS OF MY ENTRANCE EXAM. I PASSED!
Dea
Kotoko Iwanaga-dono
Letter of Acceptan
We are pleased to inform yo
that you passed the exam for
acceptance into our law progr
Please complete the enclosed form
BAM
Oh.
CONGRATS.
Huh?
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE AT A GREATER LOSS FOR WORDS.
WELL, I FIGURED YOU'D PROBABLY GET IN.
I didn't expect genuine congratulations.

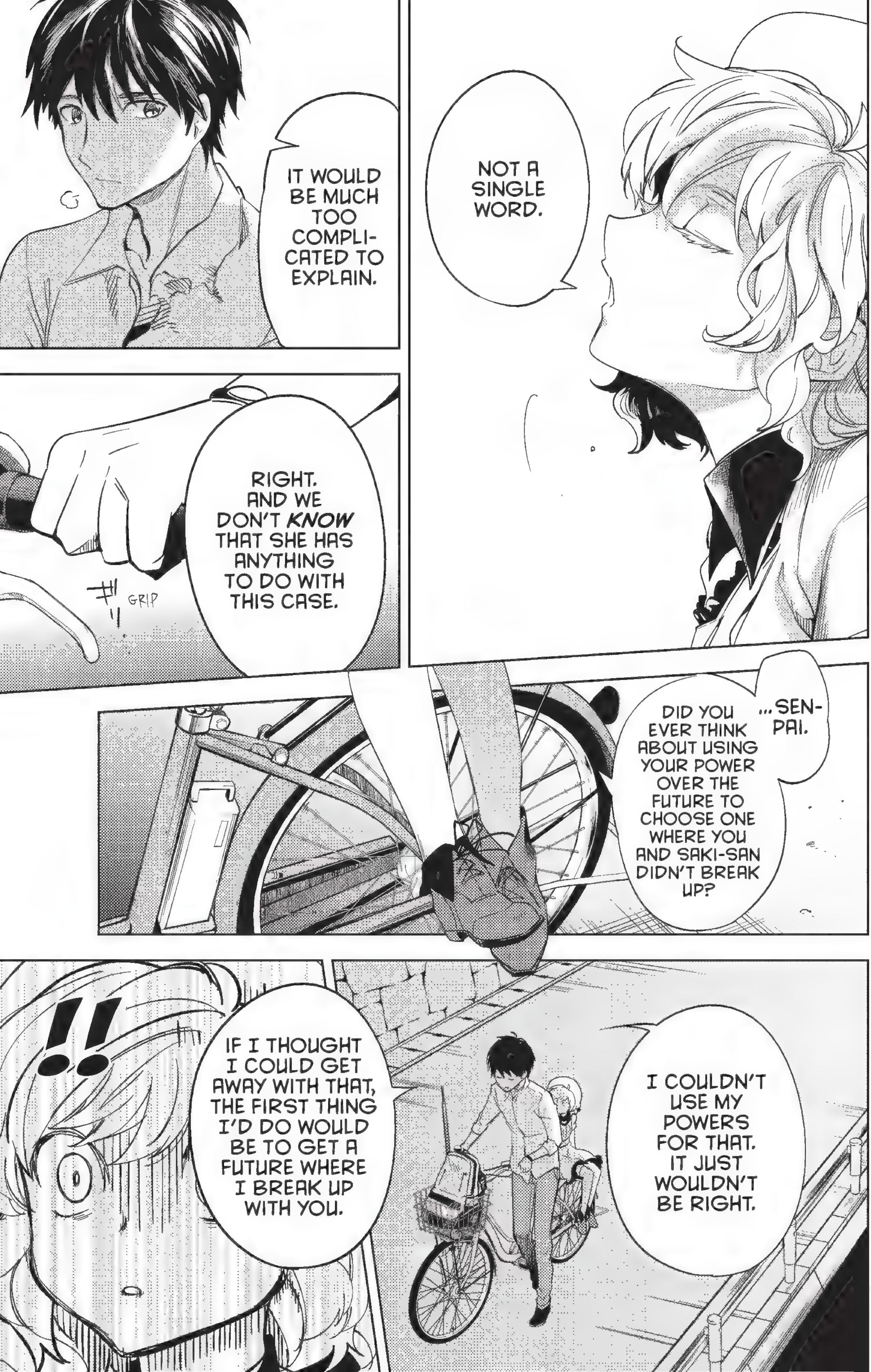

THIS SPRING, WE'LL BE GOING TO THE SAME UNIVERSITY...
...KURÔ-SENPAI.
KURÔ-SENPAI...

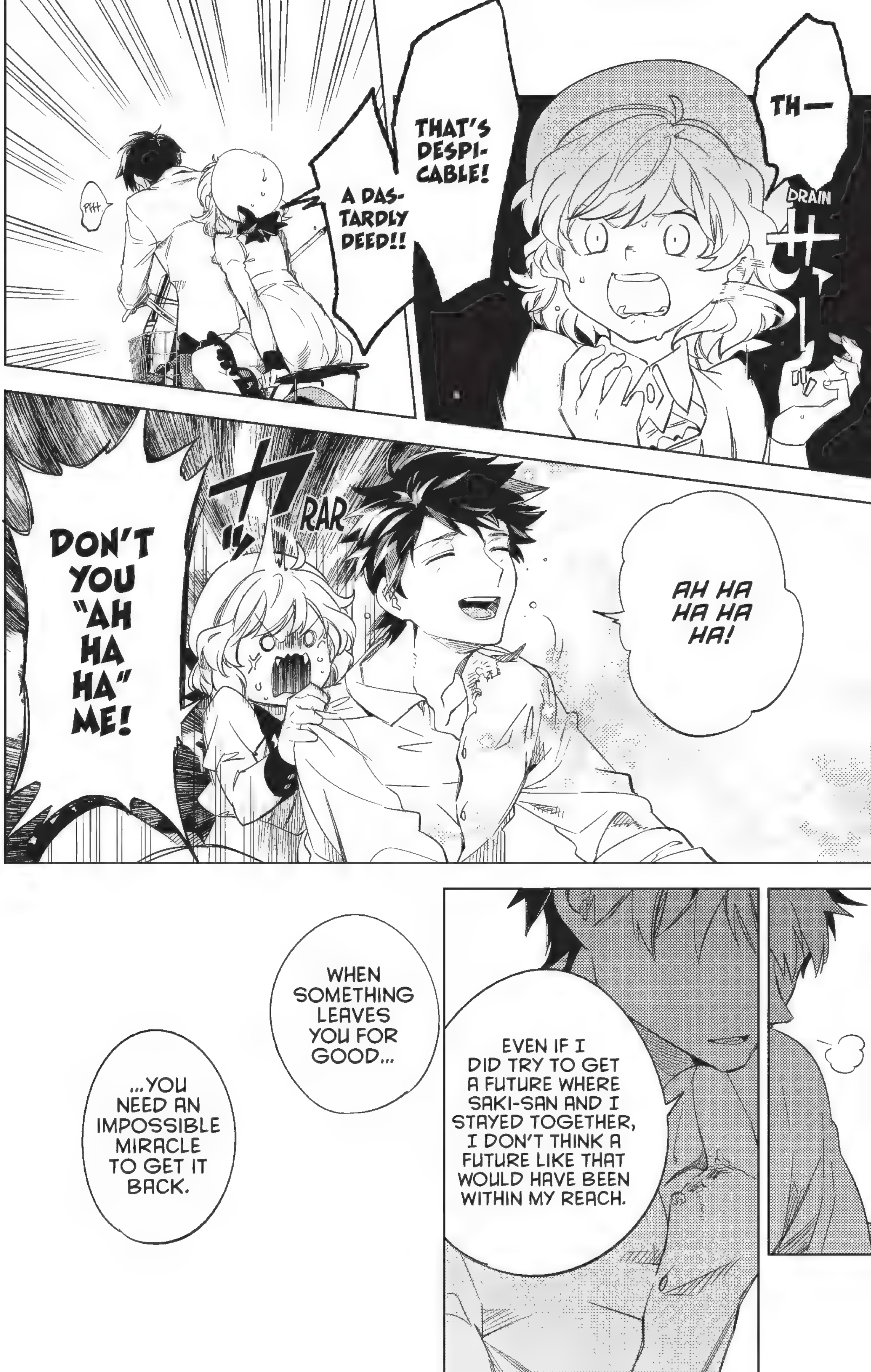

WHEN STEEL LADY NANASE KILLED YOU EARLIER, YOU DIDN'T HAPPEN TO SEE A FUTURE WHERE SHE HAD BEEN DESTROYED, DID YOU?
I THINK THERE *WAS* A FUTURE WHERE SHE WAS DESTROYED, BUT NOT ONE THAT I COULD REACH.
THERE WERE TOO MANY BRANCHES— I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SORT THROUGH THEM ALL IN TIME.
I BARELY HAD ENOUGH TIME TO GRAB ONE THAT WOULD DEFINITELY LET ME BEAT HER.
SENPAI DIED, CHOSE A FUTURE, AND CAME BACK.

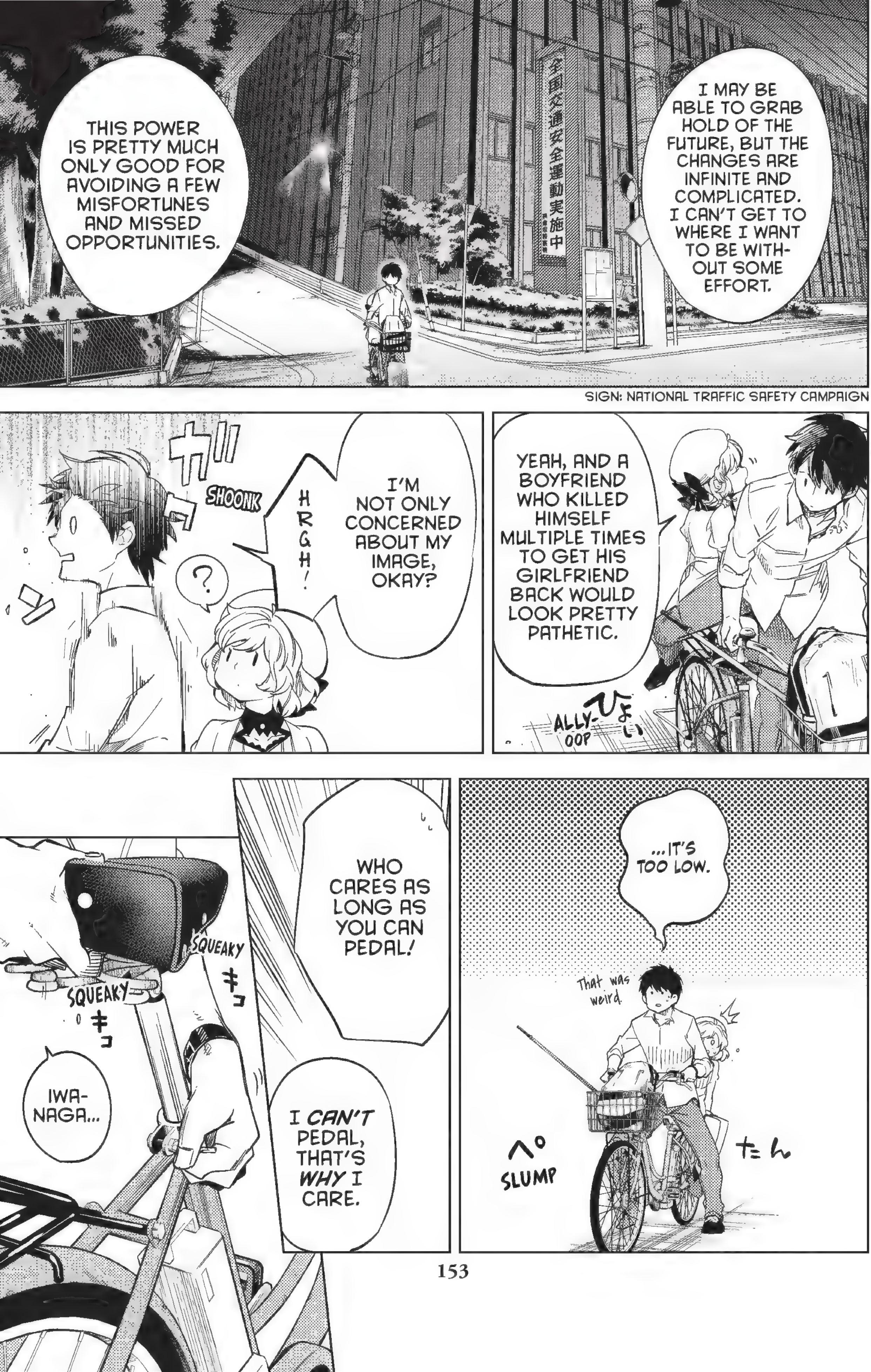

IN THAT FUTURE, HE DODGED THE STEEL BEAM, GOT THE STEEL LADY IN A HEADLOCK, AND SNAPPED HER NECK.
KURÔ-SENPAI IS FAST ENOUGH TO DODGE THE BEAM, AND STRONG ENOUGH TO BREAK HER NECK.
IT WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD EASILY HAPPEN, AND THAT'S HOW HE WAS ABLE TO DECIDE THAT IT WOULD.
BUT HE COULDN'T SELECT A FUTURE WHERE HE BEAT HER ONCE AND FOR ALL.
THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH A FUTURE WAS EXTREMELY LOW AT THAT POINT IN TIME—IT **MIGHT** HAVE HAPPENED IF ENOUGH MIRACLES CAME INTO PLAY...
...BUT THAT BRANCH WAS OUT OF SENPAI'S REACH.


IF I CAN JUST GIVE HIM THE POSSIBILITY, THEN WE CAN DEFEAT STEEL LADY NANASE.
SO I NEED TO PUT THAT FUTURE WHERE HE **CAN** REACH IT.
IT WON'T BE A GAMBLE— SENPAI WILL MAKE IT A CERTAINTY.
BUT YOU COULDN'T BEAT HER.
BECAUSE YOU KEEP THINKING YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING BY YOURSELF.
LOOK WHO'S TALKING.
IF I DIE, I'LL COME BACK, BUT IF *YOU* DIE, THAT'S IT.

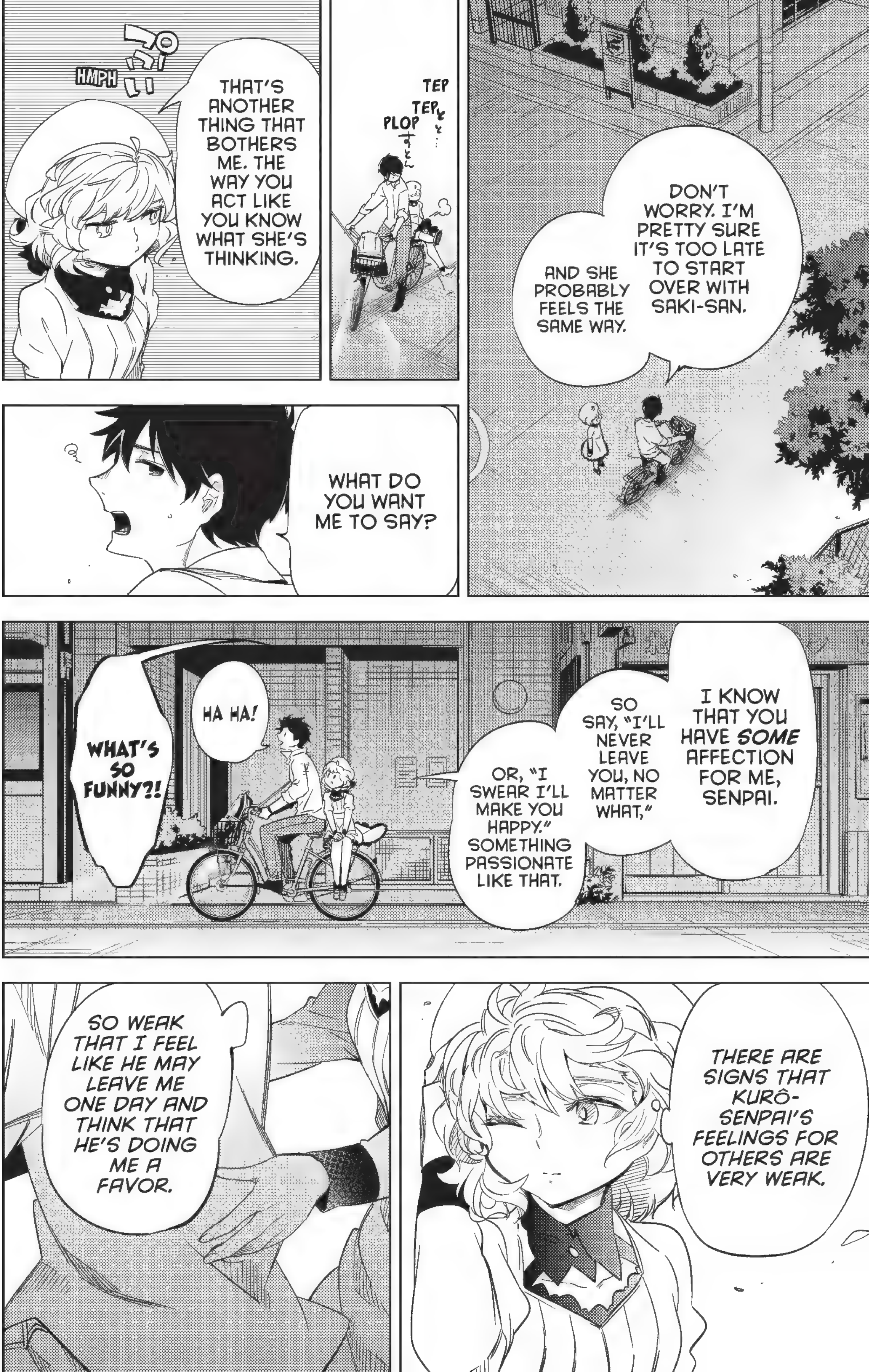

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CAN'T JUST DO WHATEVER YOU WANT AND ALWAYS COME OUT UNSCATHED.
HE ABANDONS ME FOR A WEEK AND NOW HE'S ACTING OVERPROTECTIVE?
HMPH
...YOU DIDN'T TELL SAKI-SAN
...ABOUT HER, DID YOU?
...
RATTLE
RATTLE

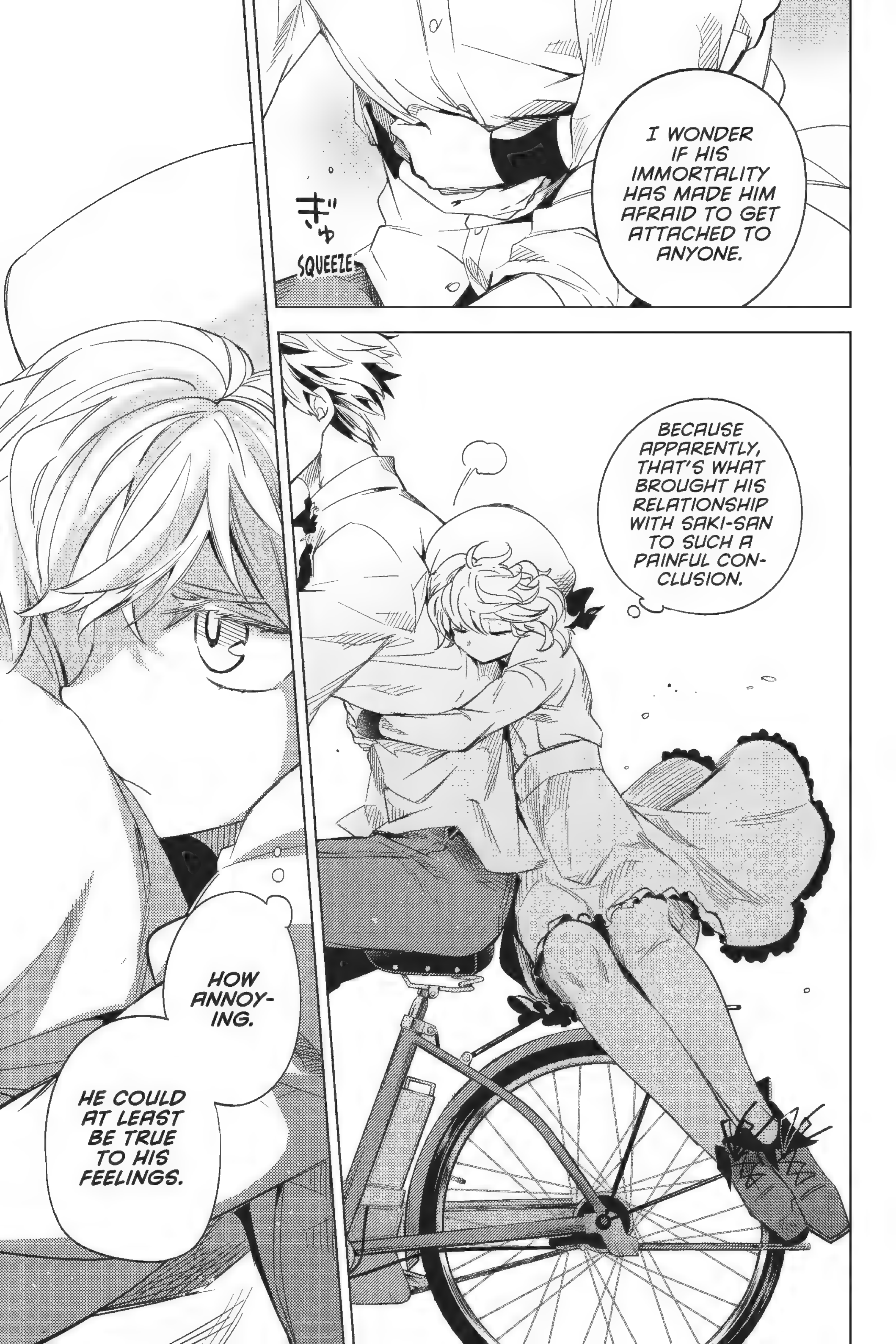

NOT A SINGLE WORD.
IT WOULD BE MUCH TOO COMPLICATED TO EXPLAIN.
RIGHT. AND WE DON'T *KNOW* THAT SHE HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS CASE.
GRIP
...SENPAI.
DID YOU EVER THINK ABOUT USING YOUR POWER OVER THE FUTURE TO CHOOSE ONE WHERE YOU AND SAKI-SAN DIDN'T BREAK UP?
I COULDN'T USE MY POWERS FOR THAT. IT JUST WOULDN'T BE RIGHT.
IF I THOUGHT I COULD GET AWAY WITH THAT, THE FIRST THING I'D DO WOULD BE TO GET A FUTURE WHERE I BREAK UP WITH YOU.
!!

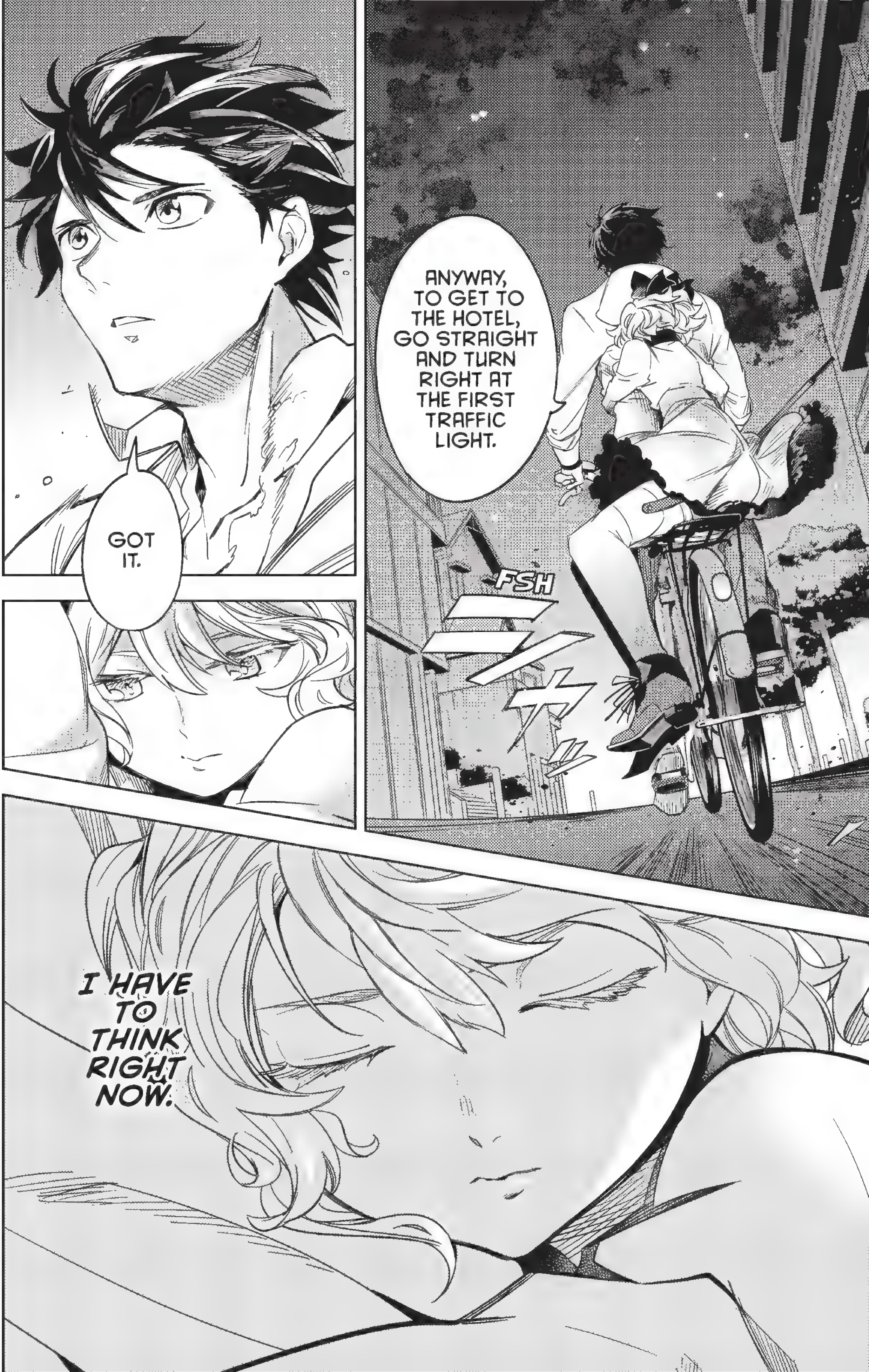

TH—
DRAIN
THAT'S DESPICABLE!
A DASTARDLY DEED!!
Pfft...
AH HA HA HA HA!
RAR
DON'T YOU "AH HA HA HA" ME!
EVEN IF I DID TRY TO GET A FUTURE WHERE SAKI-SAN AND I STAYED TOGETHER, I DON'T THINK A FUTURE LIKE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN WITHIN MY REACH.
WHEN SOMETHING LEAVES YOU FOR GOOD...
...YOU NEED AN IMPOSSIBLE MIRACLE TO GET IT BACK.

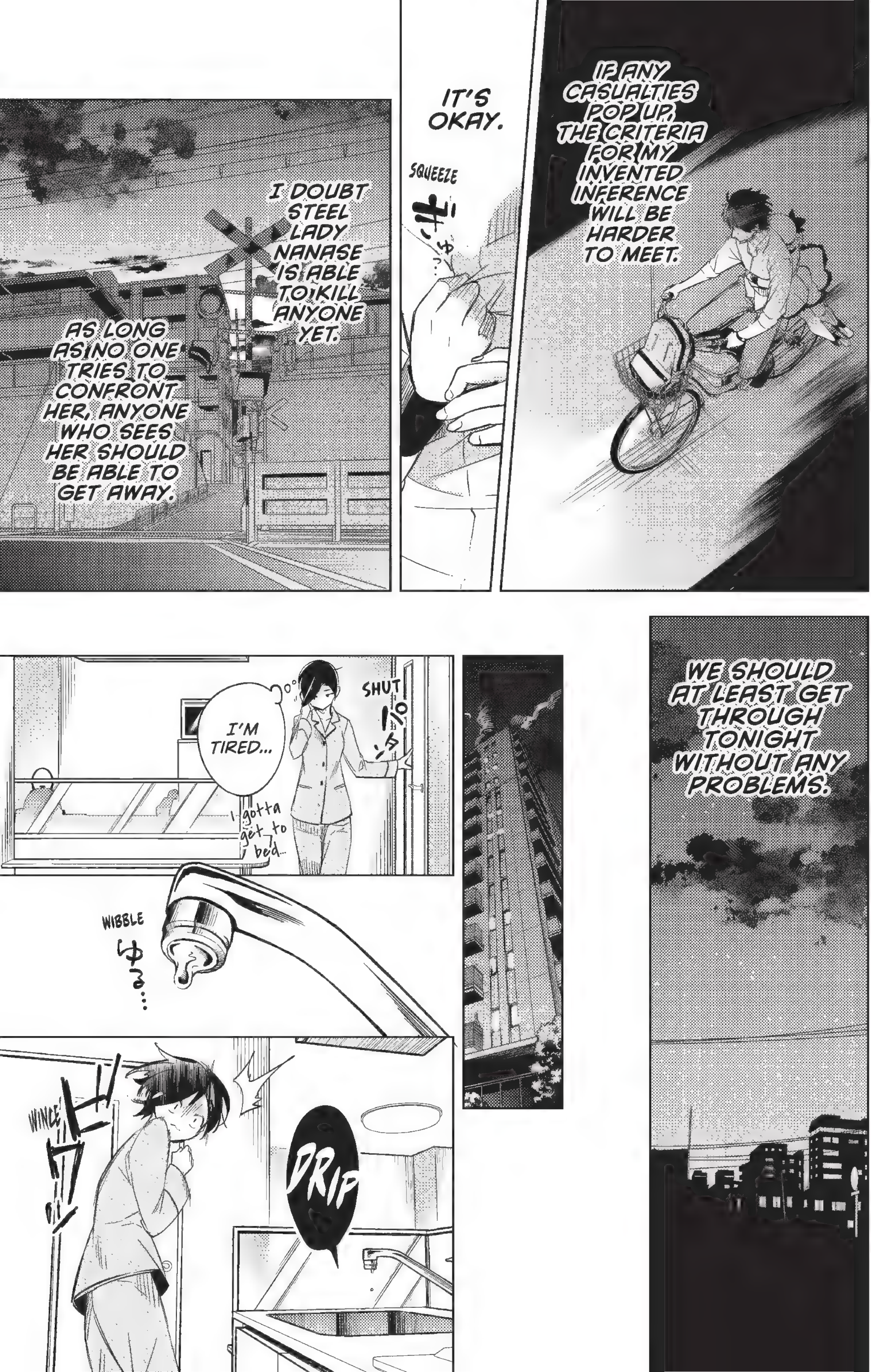

I MAY BE ABLE TO GRAB HOLD OF THE FUTURE, BUT THE CHANGES ARE INFINITE AND COMPLICATED. I CAN'T GET TO WHERE I WANT TO BE WITHOUT SOME EFFORT.
全国交通安全運動実施中
THIS POWER IS PRETTY MUCH ONLY GOOD FOR AVOIDING A FEW MISFORTUNES AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES.
YEAH, AND A BOYFRIEND WHO KILLED HIMSELF MULTIPLE TIMES TO GET HIS GIRLFRIEND BACK WOULD LOOK PRETTY PATHETIC.
ALLY-OOP ひょい
I'M NOT ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT MY IMAGE, OKAY?
HRGH!
?
ガッ SHOONK
...IT'S TOO LOW.
That was weird
へ SLUMP
たん
WHO CARES AS LONG AS YOU CAN PEDAL!
I *CAN'T* PEDAL, THAT'S *WHY* I CARE.
SQUEAKY キュ
SQUEAKY キュ
IWA-NAGA...

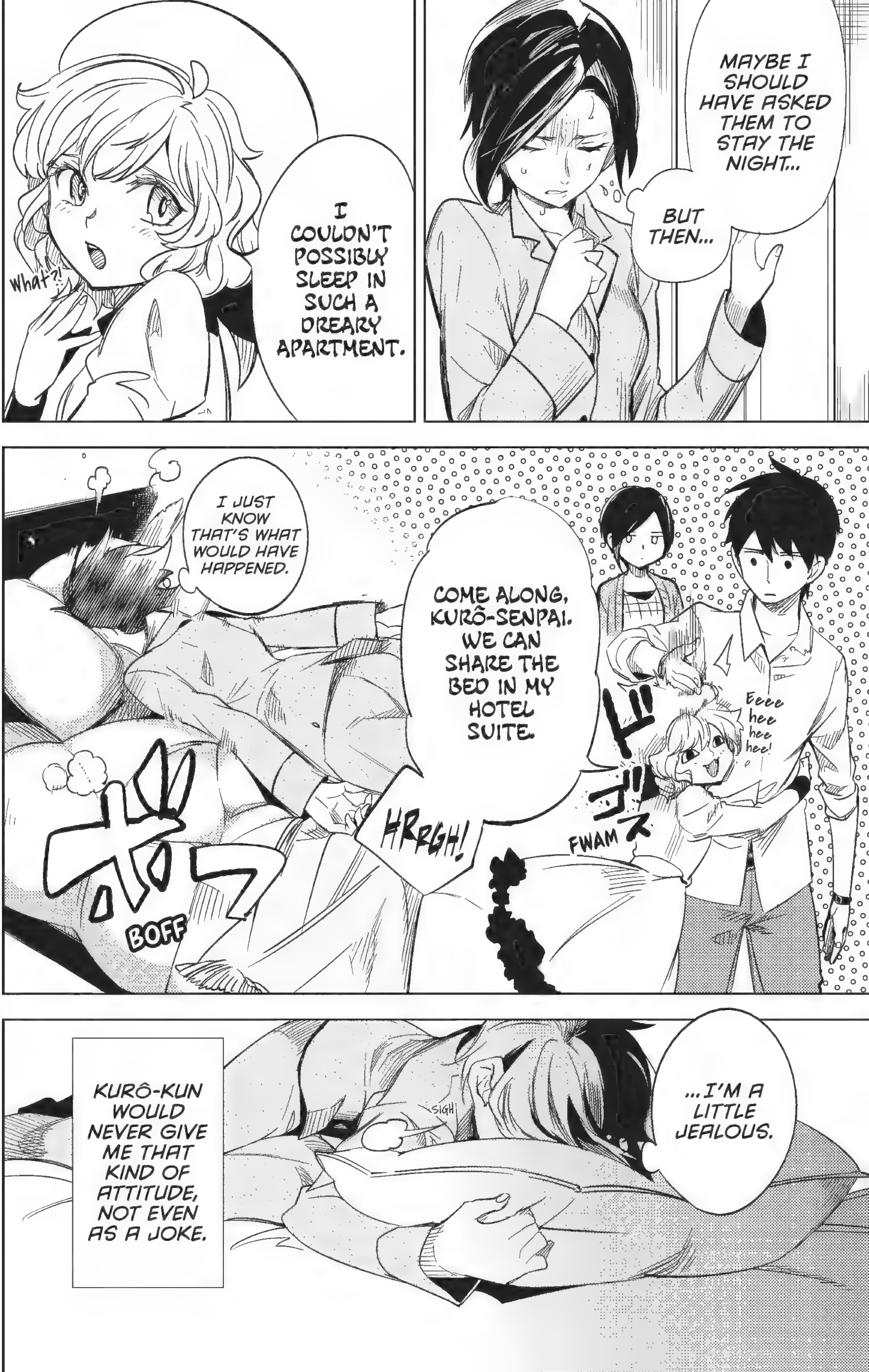
SIGN: NATIONAL TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN

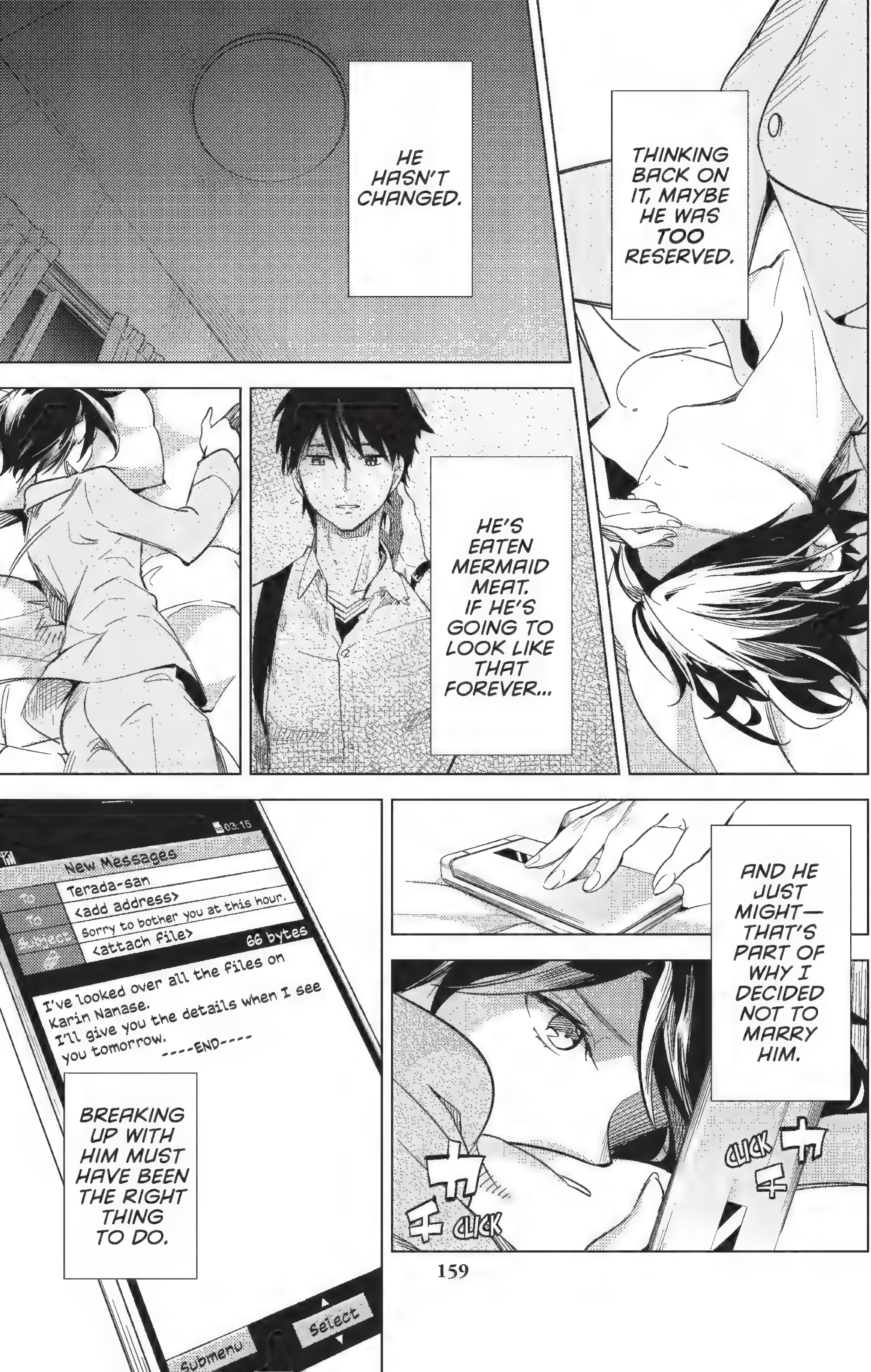

DON'T WORRY. I'M PRETTY SURE IT'S TOO LATE TO START OVER WITH SAKI-SAN.
AND SHE PROBABLY FEELS THE SAME WAY.
TEP TEP とと…
PLOP すとん
THAT'S ANOTHER THING THAT BOTHERS ME. THE WAY YOU ACT LIKE YOU KNOW WHAT SHE'S THINKING.
HMPH プイ
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?
I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE *SOME* AFFECTION FOR ME, SENPAI.
SO SAY, "I'LL NEVER LEAVE YOU, NO MATTER WHAT,"
OR, "I SWEAR I'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY." SOMETHING PASSIONATE LIKE THAT.
HA HA!
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!
THERE ARE SIGNS THAT KURÔ-SENPAI'S FEELINGS FOR OTHERS ARE VERY WEAK.
SO WEAK THAT I FEEL LIKE HE MAY LEAVE ME ONE DAY AND THINK THAT HE'S DOING ME A FAVOR.


I WONDER IF HIS IMMORTALITY HAS MADE HIM AFRAID TO GET ATTACHED TO ANYONE.
ぎゅ
SQUEEZE
BECAUSE APPARENTLY, THAT'S WHAT BROUGHT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH SAKI-SAN TO SUCH A PAINFUL CONCLUSION.
HOW ANNOYING.
HE COULD AT LEAST BE TRUE TO HIS FEELINGS.


ANYWAY, TO GET TO THE HOTEL, GO STRAIGHT AND TURN RIGHT AT THE FIRST TRAFFIC LIGHT.
FSH
GOT IT.
I HAVE TO THINK RIGHT NOW.

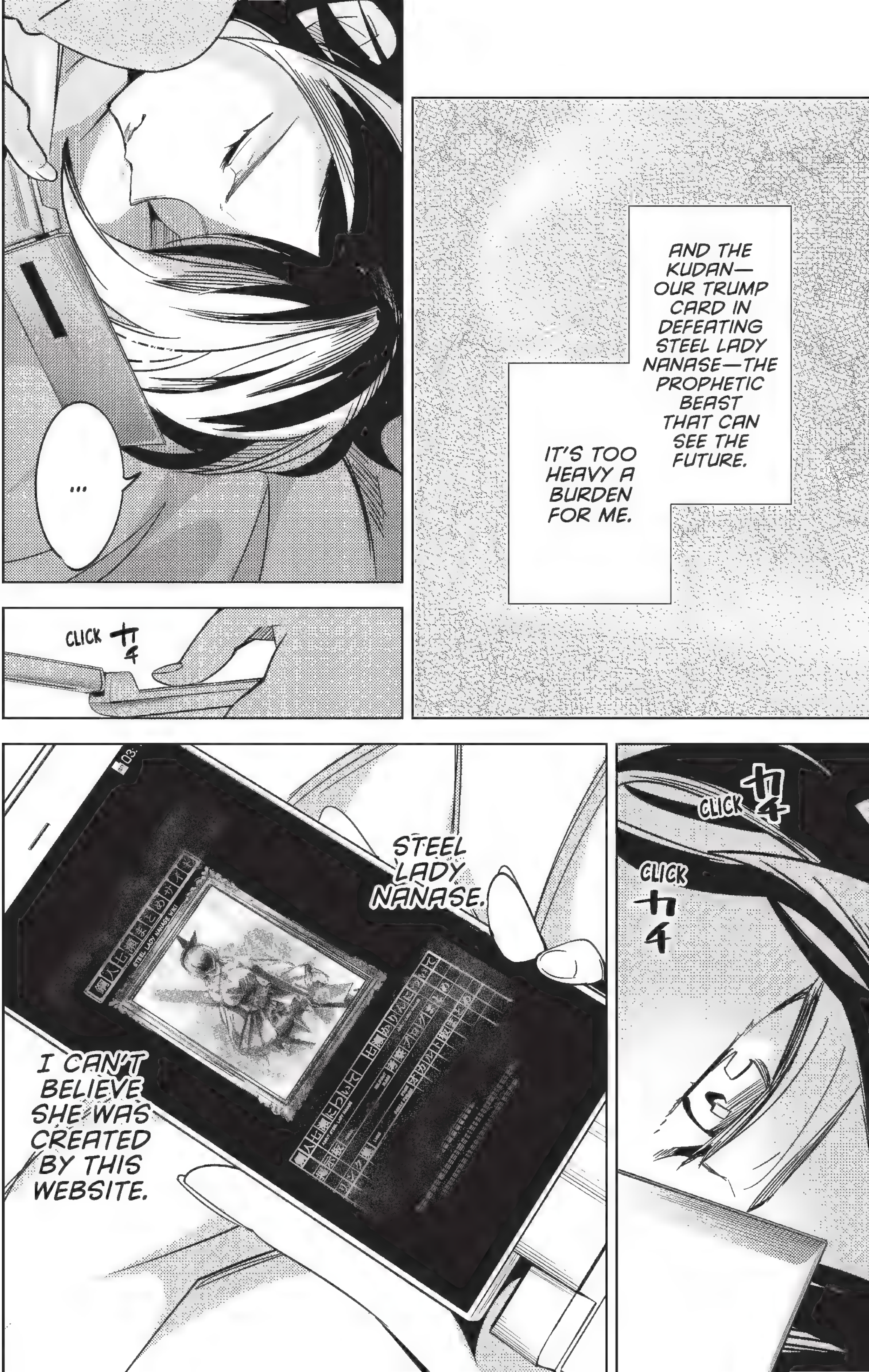

IF ANY CASUALTIES POP UP, THE CRITERIA FOR MY INVENTED INFERENCE WILL BE HARDER TO MEET.
IT'S OKAY.
SQUEEZE
ぎゅ
I DOUBT STEEL LADY NANASE IS ABLE TO KILL ANYONE YET.
AS LONG AS NO ONE TRIES TO CONFRONT HER, ANYONE WHO SEES HER SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET AWAY.
WE SHOULD AT LEAST GET THROUGH TONIGHT WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS.
SHUT
I'M TIRED...
I gotta get to bed...
WIBBLE
DRIP
WINCE

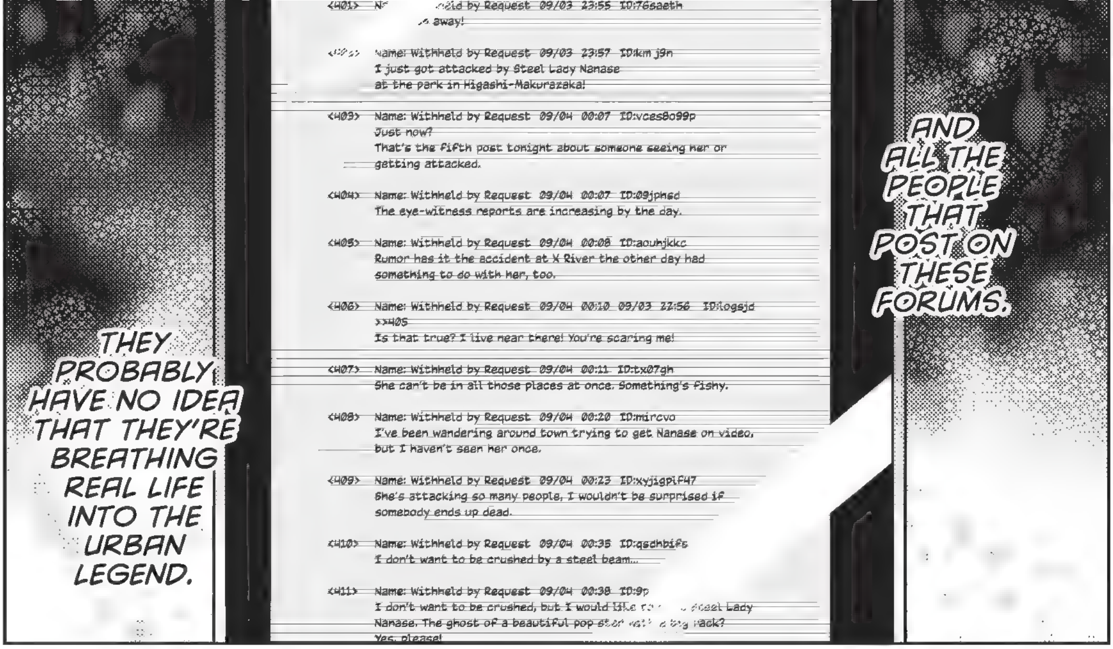

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE ASKED THEM TO STAY THE NIGHT...
BUT THEN...
I COULDN'T POSSIBLY SLEEP IN SUCH A DREARY APARTMENT.
What?!
COME ALONG, KURÔ-SENPAI. WE CAN SHARE THE BED IN MY HOTEL SUITE.
Eeee hee hee hee!
ドゴス
FWAM
HRRGH!
I JUST KNOW THAT'S WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.
ボフ
BOFF
...I'M A LITTLE JEALOUS.
SIGH
KURÔ-KUN WOULD NEVER GIVE ME THAT KIND OF ATTITUDE, NOT EVEN AS A JOKE.


THINKING BACK ON IT, MAYBE HE WAS TOO RESERVED.
HE HASN'T CHANGED.
HE'S EATEN MERMAID MEAT. IF HE'S GOING TO LOOK LIKE THAT FOREVER...
AND HE JUST MIGHT—THAT'S PART OF WHY I DECIDED NOT TO MARRY HIM.
CLICK
CLICK
03:15
New Messages
66 bytes
Submenu
Select
BREAKING UP WITH HIM MUST HAVE BEEN THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

Terada-san
<add address>
Sorry to bother you at this hour.
<attach file>

I've looked over all the files on Karin Nanase.
I'll give you the details when I see you tomorrow.
----END----


AND THE KUDAN—OUR TRUMP CARD IN DEFEATING STEEL LADY NANASE—THE PROPHETIC BEAST THAT CAN SEE THE FUTURE.
IT'S TOO HEAVY A BURDEN FOR ME.
...
CLICK カチ
CLICK カチ
CLICK カチ
STEEL LADY NANASE.
鋼人七瀬まとめサイト
STEEL LADY NANASE WIKI
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE WAS CREATED BY THIS WEBSITE.


AND ALL THE PEOPLE THAT POST ON THESE FORUMS.
THEY PROBABLY HAVE NO IDEA THAT THEY'RE BREATHING REAL LIFE INTO THE URBAN LEGEND.

<401> N[illegible] eld by Request 09/03 23:55 ID:76saeth
[illegible] away!

<[illegible]> Name: Withheld by Request 09/03 23:57 ID:km j9n
I just got attacked by Steel Lady Nanase
at the park in Higashi-Makurazaka!

<403> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:vces8o99p
Just now?
That's the fifth post tonight about someone seeing her or
getting attacked.

<404> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:07 ID:09jphsd
The eye-witness reports are increasing by the day.

<405> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:08 ID:aouhjkkc
Rumor has it the accident at X River the other day had
something to do with her, too.

<406> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:10 09/03 22:56 ID:logsjd
>>405
Is that true? I live near there! You're scaring me!

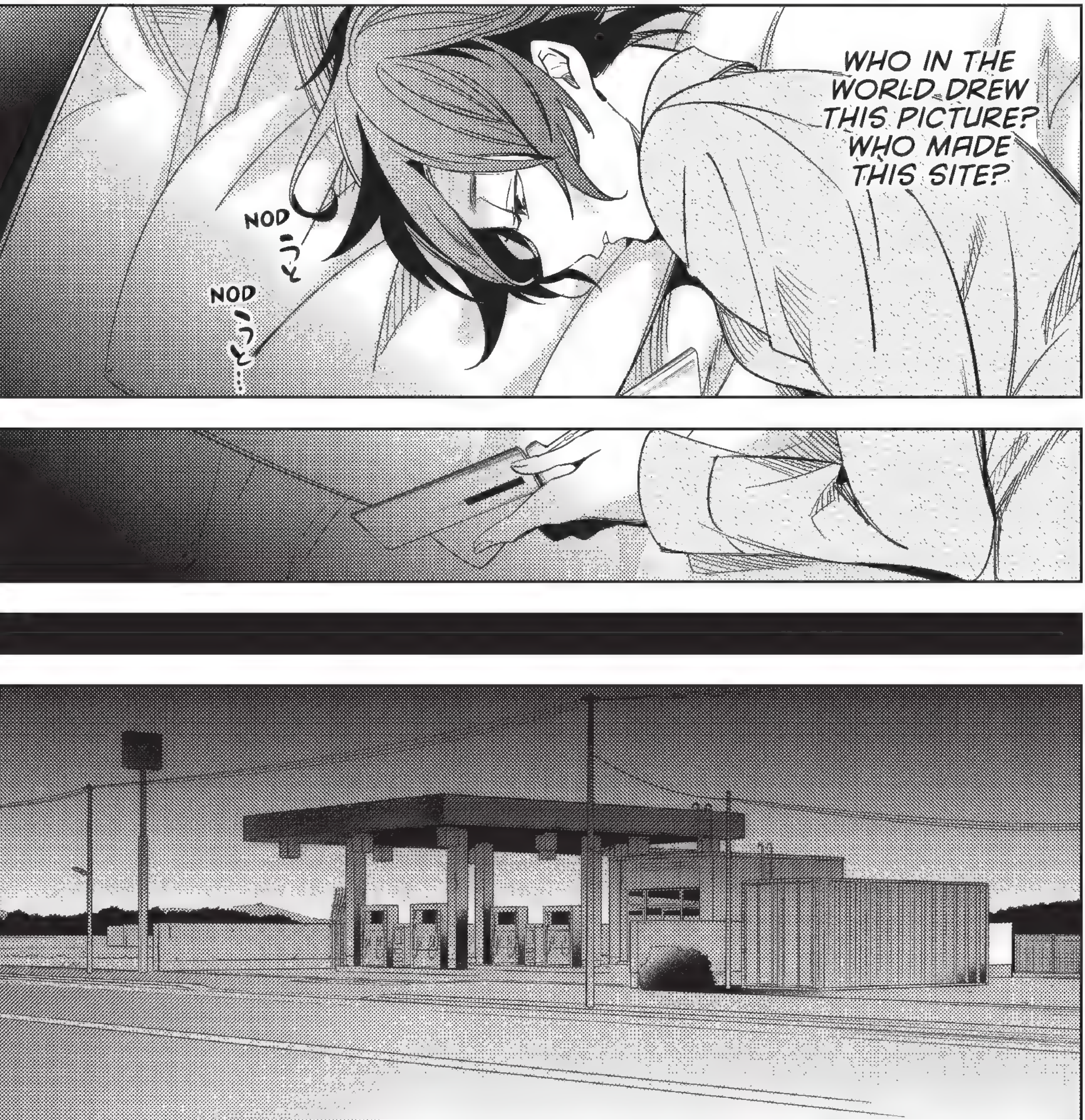
<407> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:11 ID:tx07gh
She can't be in all those places at once. Something's fishy.

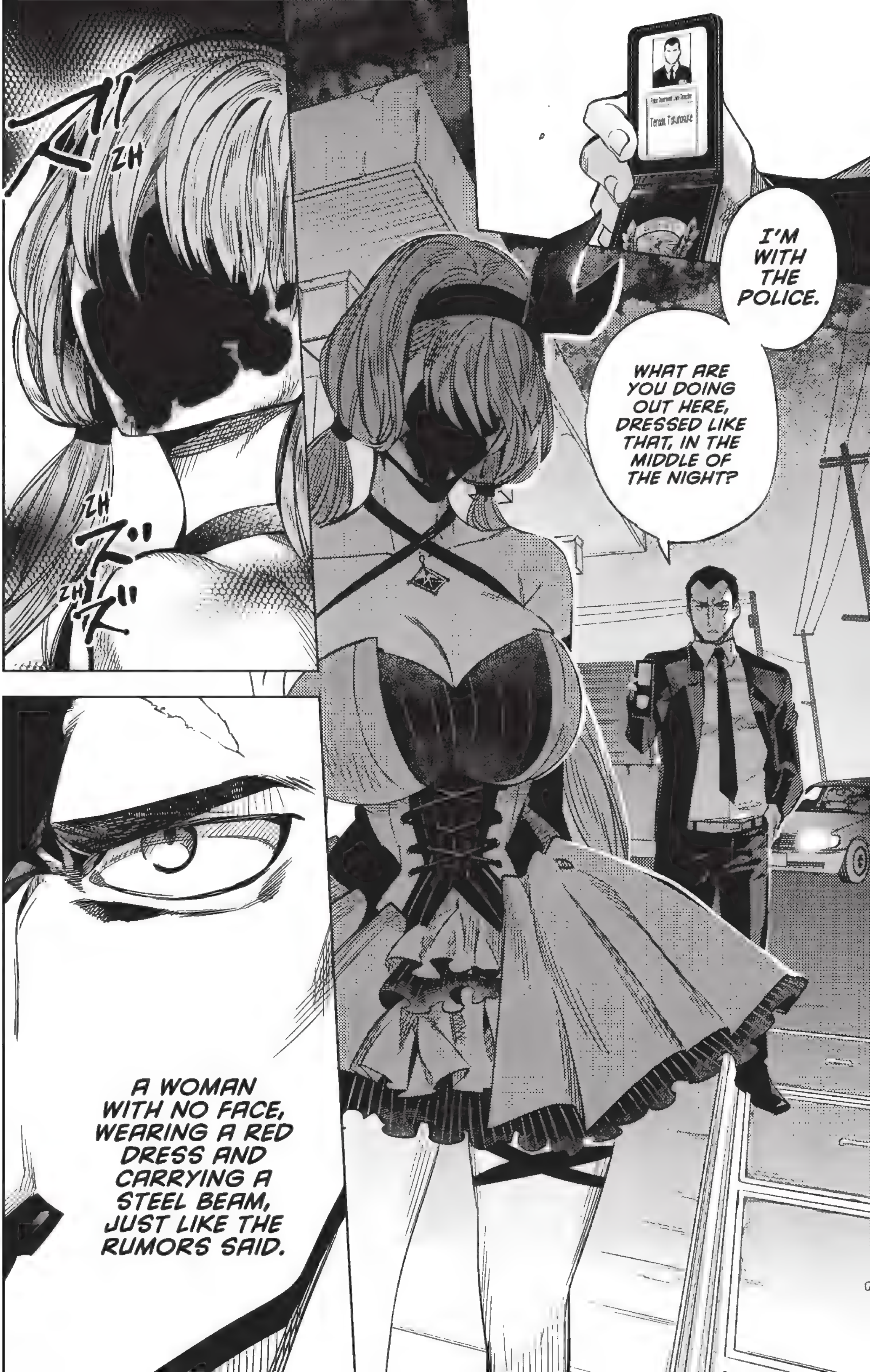
<408> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:20 ID:mircvo
I've been wandering around town trying to get Nanase on video,
but I haven't seen her once.

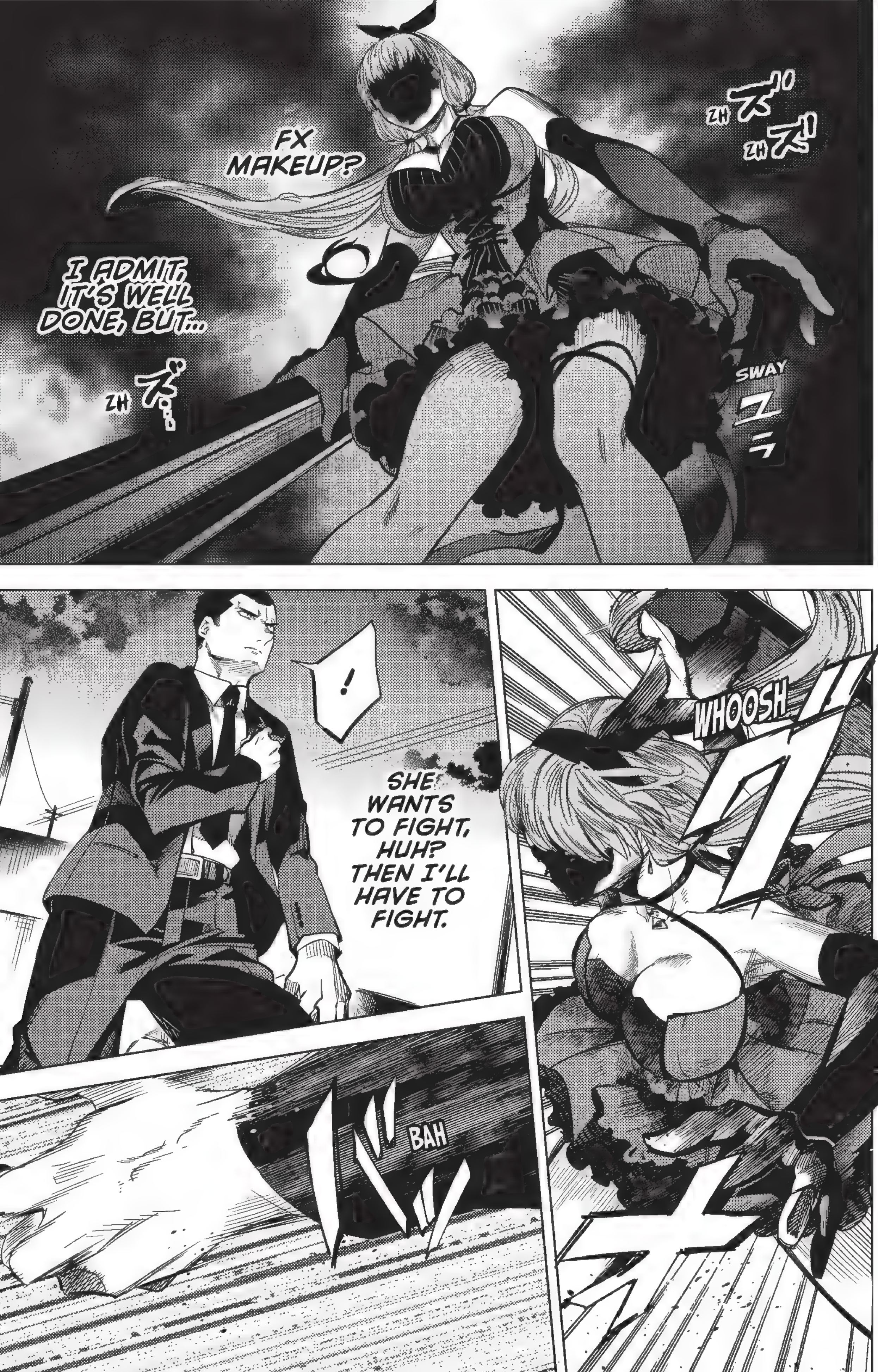
<409> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:23 ID:xyjigpif47
She's attacking so many people, I wouldn't be surprised if
somebody ends up dead.

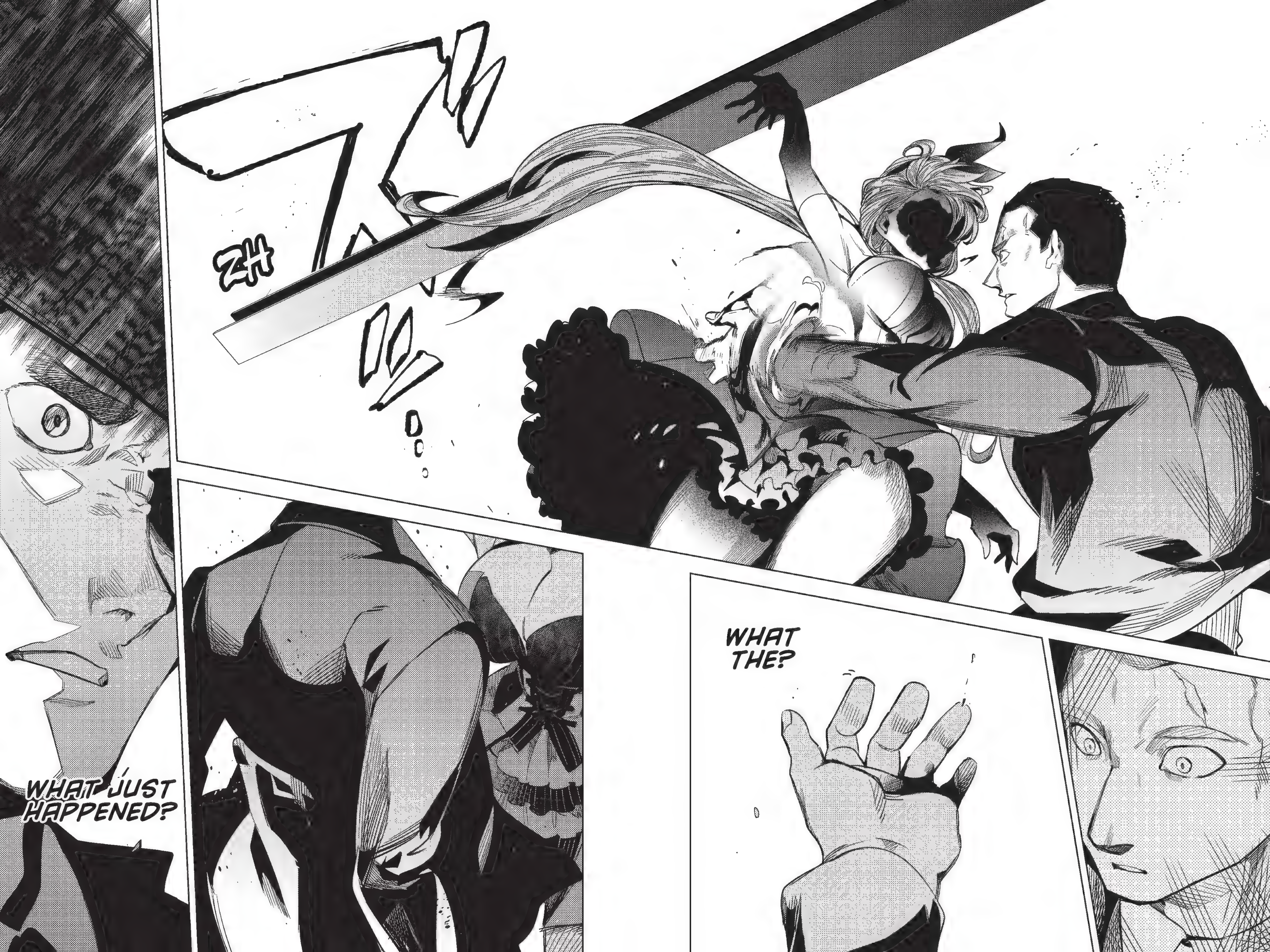
<410> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:35 ID:qsdhbifs
I don't want to be crushed by a steel beam...

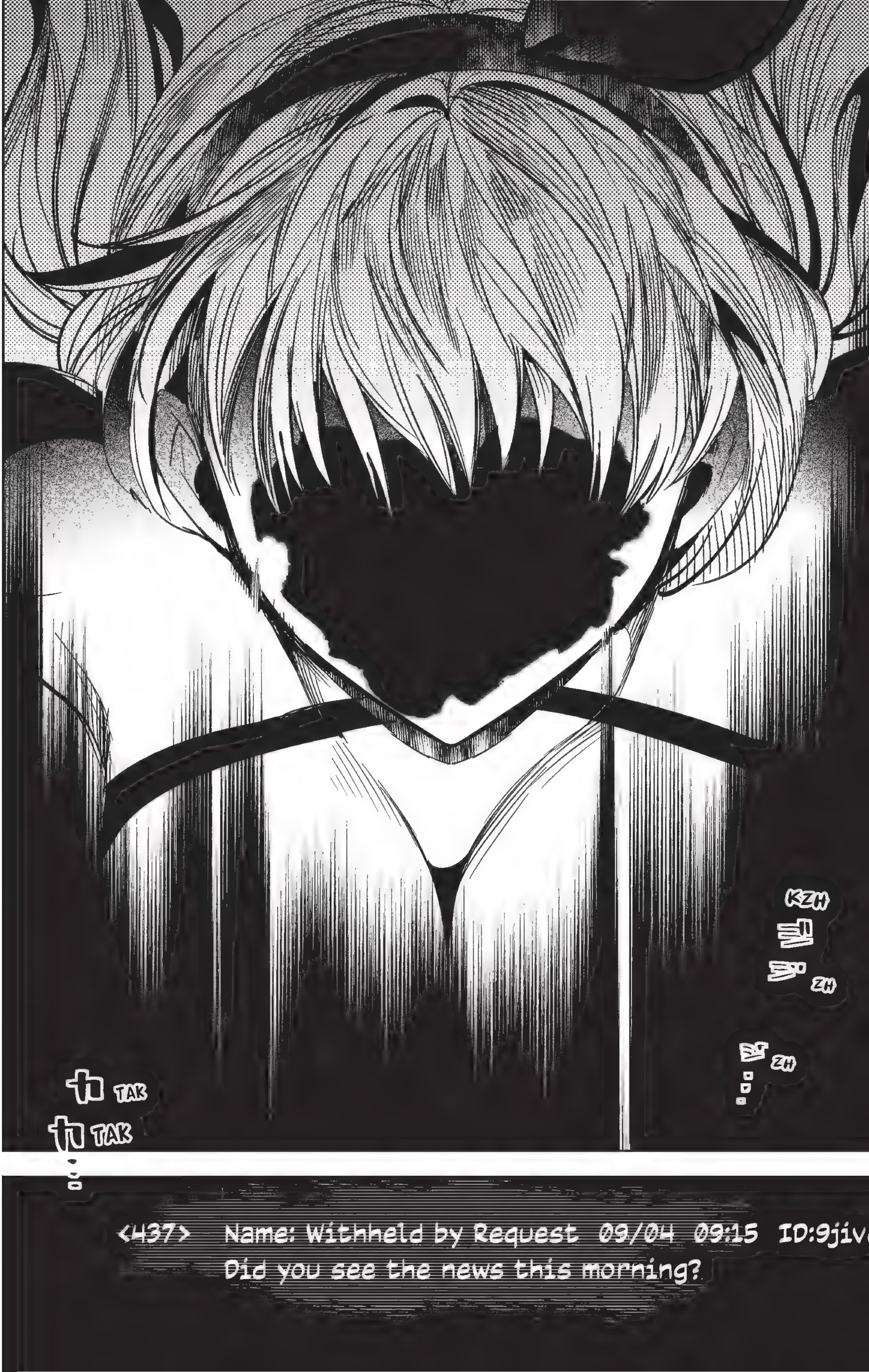
<411> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 00:38 ID:9p
I don't want to be crushed, but I would like t[illegible] Steel Lady
Nanase. The ghost of a beautiful pop star with a big rack?
Yes, please!


WHO IN THE WORLD DREW THIS PICTURE? WHO MADE THIS SITE?
NOD
こっと
NOD
こっと……


Terada Tokunosuke
I'M WITH THE POLICE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE, DRESSED LIKE THAT, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
ZH
ZH
ZH
A WOMAN WITH NO FACE, WEARING A RED DRESS AND CARRYING A STEEL BEAM, JUST LIKE THE RUMORS SAID.

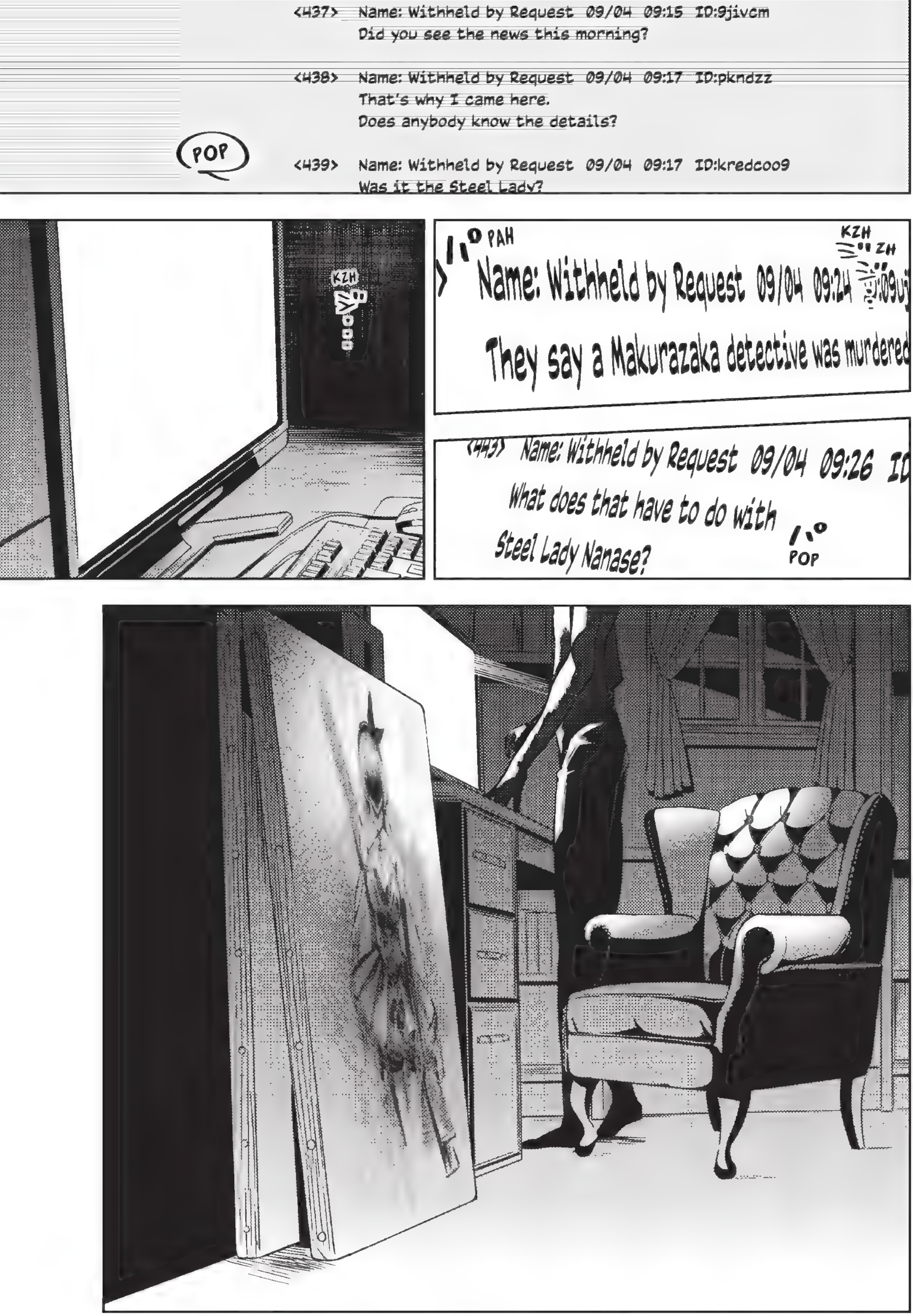

ZH ズ
ZH ズ
FX MAKEUP?
I ADMIT, IT'S WELL DONE, BUT...
ZH ズ...
SWAY ユラ
WHOOSH
!
SHE WANTS TO FIGHT, HUH? THEN I'LL HAVE TO FIGHT.
BAH


ZH
WHAT THE?
WHAT JUST HAPPENED?


KZH
ZH
ZH
TAK
TAK

<437> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:15 ID:9jiv

Did you see the news this morning?



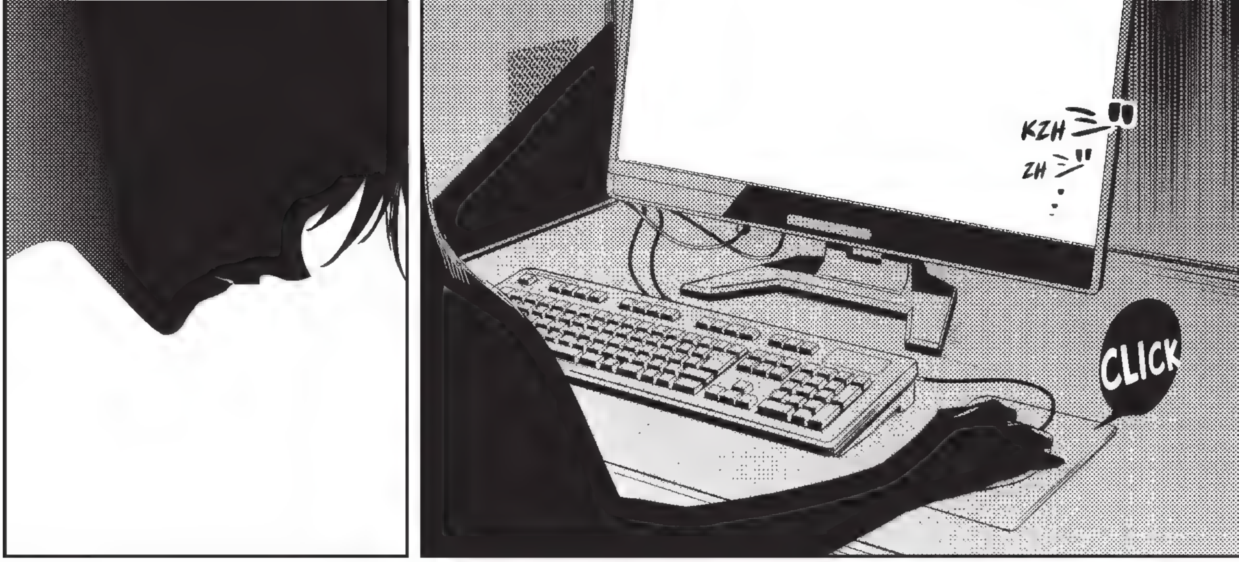
<437> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:15 ID:9jivcm
Did you see the news this morning?

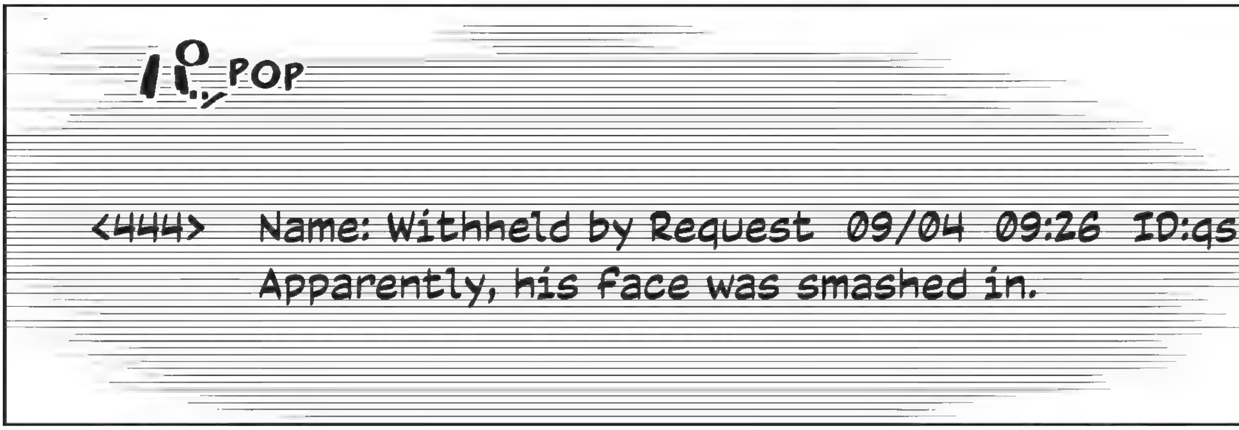
<438> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:17 ID:pkndzz
That's why I came here.
Does anybody know the details?

<439> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:17 ID:kredcoo9
Was it the Steel Lady?

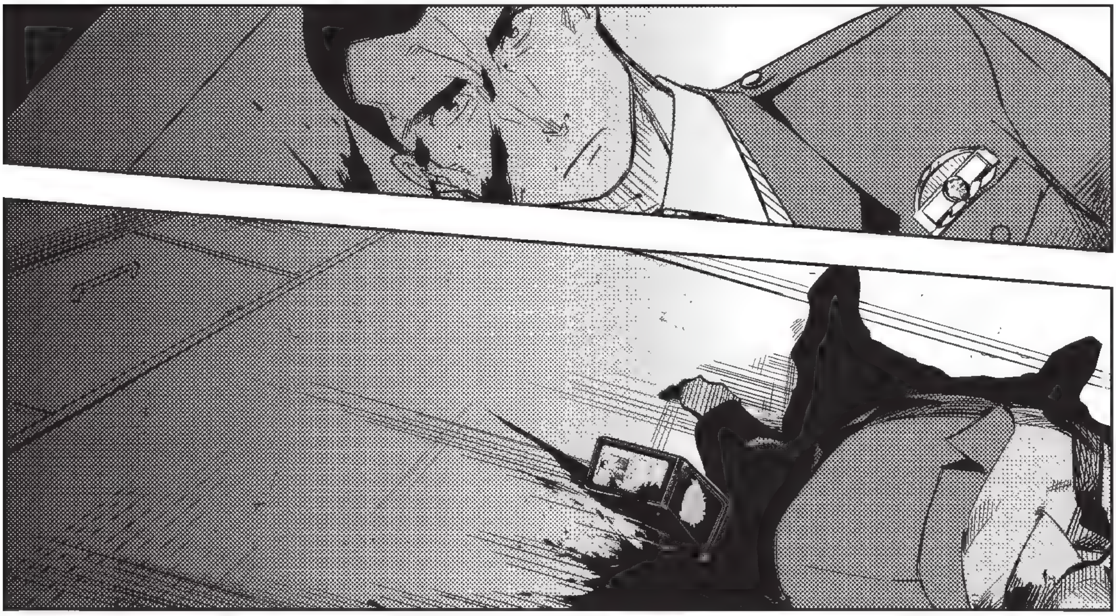
> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:24 :09uj
They say a Makurazaka detective was murdered

<443> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:26 ID
What does that have to do with
Steel Lady Nanase?


KZH
ZH
CLICK

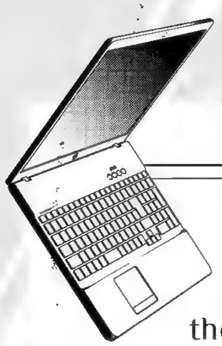


<444> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 09:26 ID:qs
Apparently, his face was smashed in.



◆ *TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 4*

IN/SPECTRE



Something Like a Comment from the Author

I am Kyo Shirodaira, the original author who, as always, is enjoying this manga as just another reader. This is volume three. Despite what I said, I can't exactly just read the series as a form of lighthearted entertainment.

Especially because, since I wrote the original book a few years ago, I've lost the sense that I'm reading my own work, so I'll get all haughty, and think things like, "Listen to that dialogue! This author has no idea how to write," and then, after a minute, I'll realize that I was the author—I wrote that dialogue—and that gets pretty awkward (then I check the novel to see what I wrote, and sure enough, it was my writing all along). But other times, I'll think, "Wow, whoever chose that wording really knows how to write," and immediately reply with, "What a way to talk about yourself!" and get ferociously embarrassed. I just can't win.

Anyway, I think in this volume we're finally starting to see what the (Japanese) title *Invented Inference* is referring to. The stage has been set and basic rules presented as to what the story wants to do as a "mystery," and now it's time to start the showdown. They even said in this volume that they're going to present a realistic solution to a supernatural phenomenon, and the plot is proceeding in a definitely mystery-type direction. But I will admit that it is fairly nonstandard in that they're going to explain how an actual spectre is not a spectre.

But this sort of premise isn't so unusual for mystery stories. There are lots of earlier examples, and plenty of variations on it, too. You also see it in works categorized as fantasy mystery novels, but of all those, the novel I wrote (and I mentioned this in the foreword and on the belly band of the Japanese edition) was mostly inspired by "Lust of the White Serpent," a story from the *Ugetsu Monogatari* anthology compiled by Ueda Akinari back in the Edo Era.

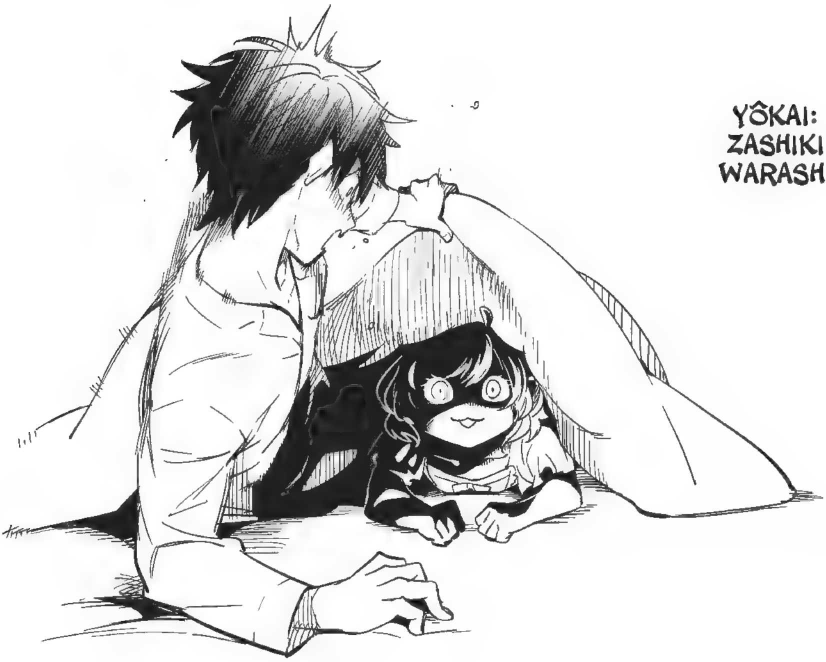
In "Lust of the White Serpent," there's a passage where an actual spectre gives a rational explanation as to why the bizarre phenomenon that she herself had caused through her spectre powers were not actually caused by a spectre, which was an unusual twist that left a deep impression on me. Then there's the government official who has no trouble believing in the supernatural and uses discretion when dealing with the characters publicly, but when another character hears the rational explanation, he quickly rejects the idea of the paranormal, as if it's only common sense that there wouldn't be any such supernatural activity "in this day and age," and so we see another curious disconnect between worldviews. And I think that disconnect stood out even more because it was written in an older time, about an even older time.

Some of you may be thinking, "So what?" but even as worldviews and logic are warped and twisted, everything somehow comes together the way it's supposed to and the world looks like everything works just fine, but something's not right—that's the sense that I got from that story, and in some ways, I was trying to re-create it.

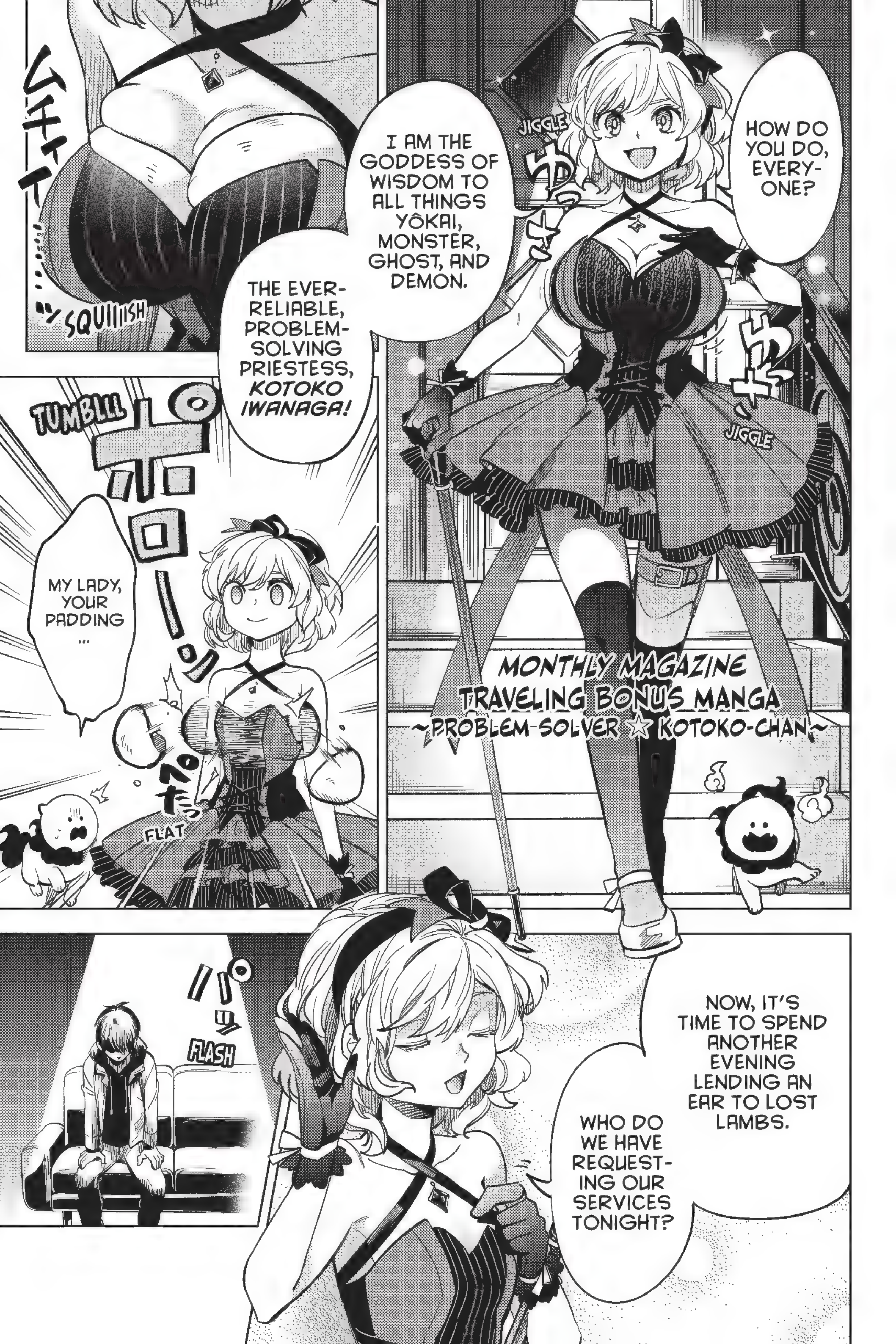
Now a murder has taken place in the manga, raising the bar on what Kotoko Iwanaga must do to win, but this is where the story will be moving into its solution arc. There are some developments that are going to be even harder to turn into a manga, and I'm worried that Katase-sensei's going to yell at me, "You can only put so much dialogue into something!" I really can't just be a casual reader.

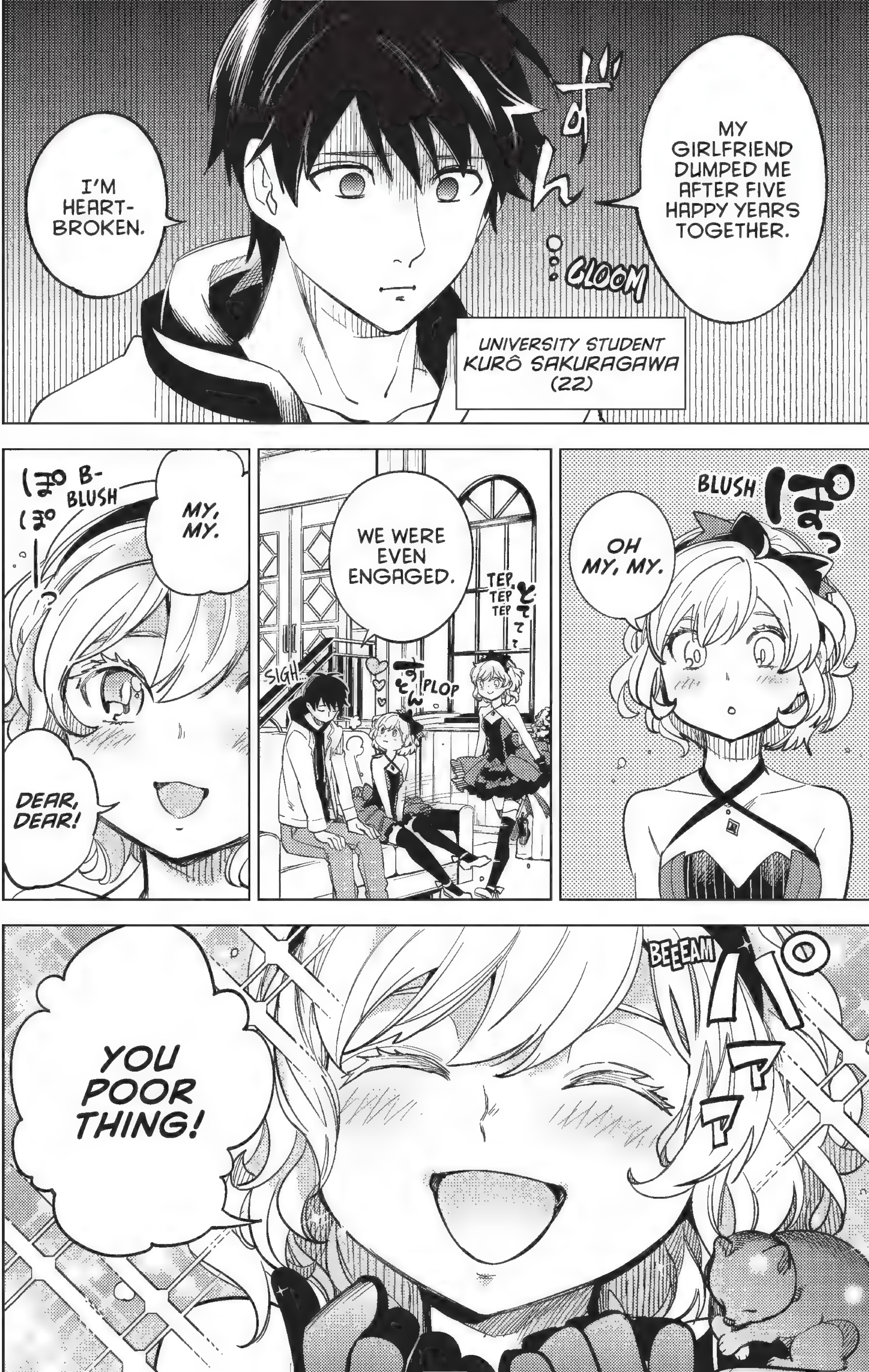
Well, I hope you'll read the next volume.

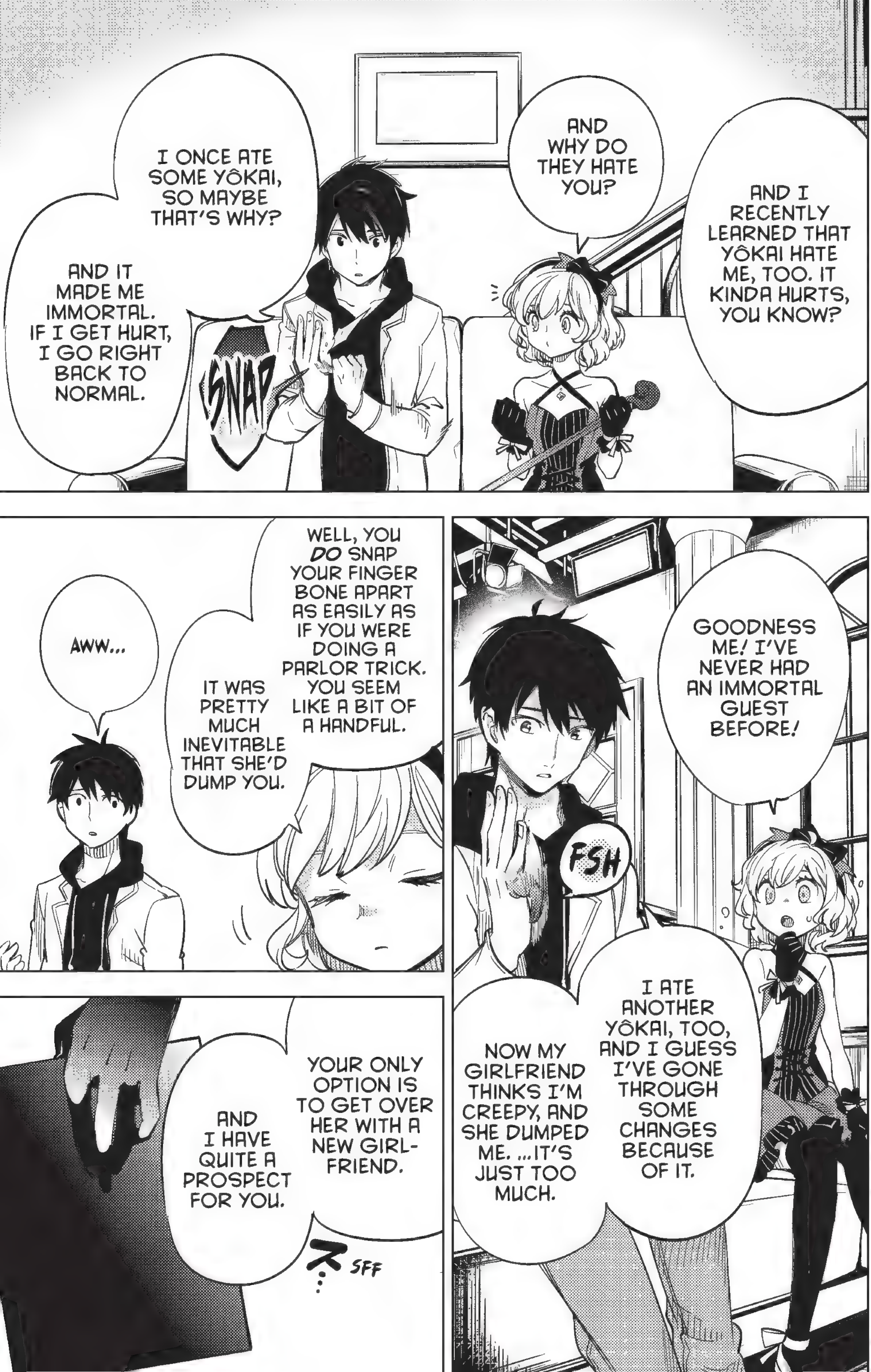
Kyo Shirodaira

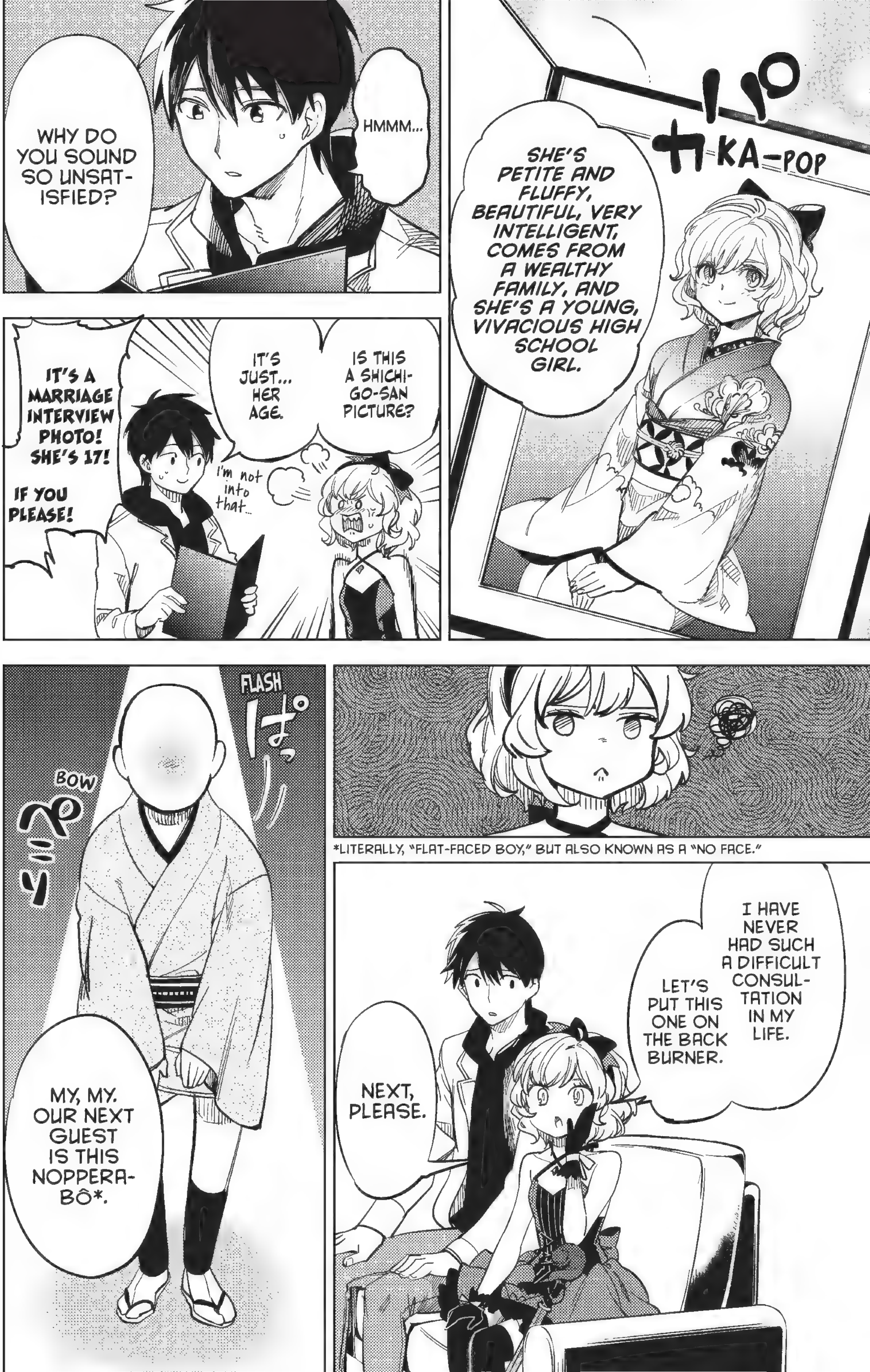


YÔKAI:
ZASHIKI
WARASHI

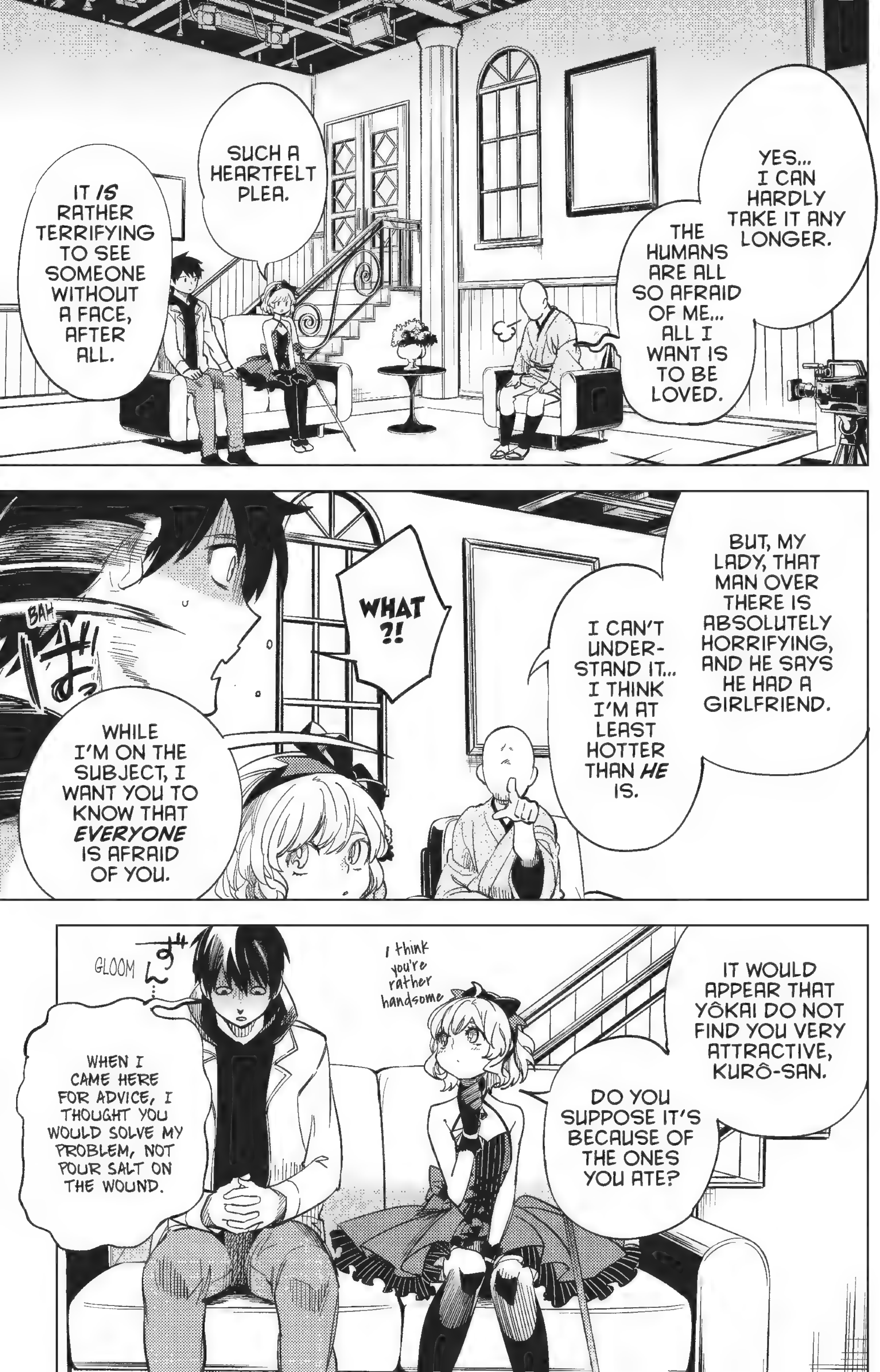

HOW DO YOU DO, EVERYONE?
I AM THE GODDESS OF WISDOM TO ALL THINGS YÔKAI, MONSTER, GHOST, AND DEMON.
THE EVER-RELIABLE, PROBLEM-SOLVING PRIESTESS, KOTOKO IWANAGA!
JIGGLE
ゆっさ
ゆっさ
JIGGLE
MONTHLY MAGAZINE TRAVELING BONUS MANGA
~PROBLEM-SOLVER ☆ KOTOKO-CHAN~
ムチィィィ
SQUIIIISH
TUMBLLL
ポローン
ぺたっ
FLAT
MY LADY, YOUR PADDING ...
NOW, IT'S TIME TO SPEND ANOTHER EVENING LENDING AN EAR TO LOST LAMBS.
WHO DO WE HAVE REQUESTING OUR SERVICES TONIGHT?
パッ
FLASH

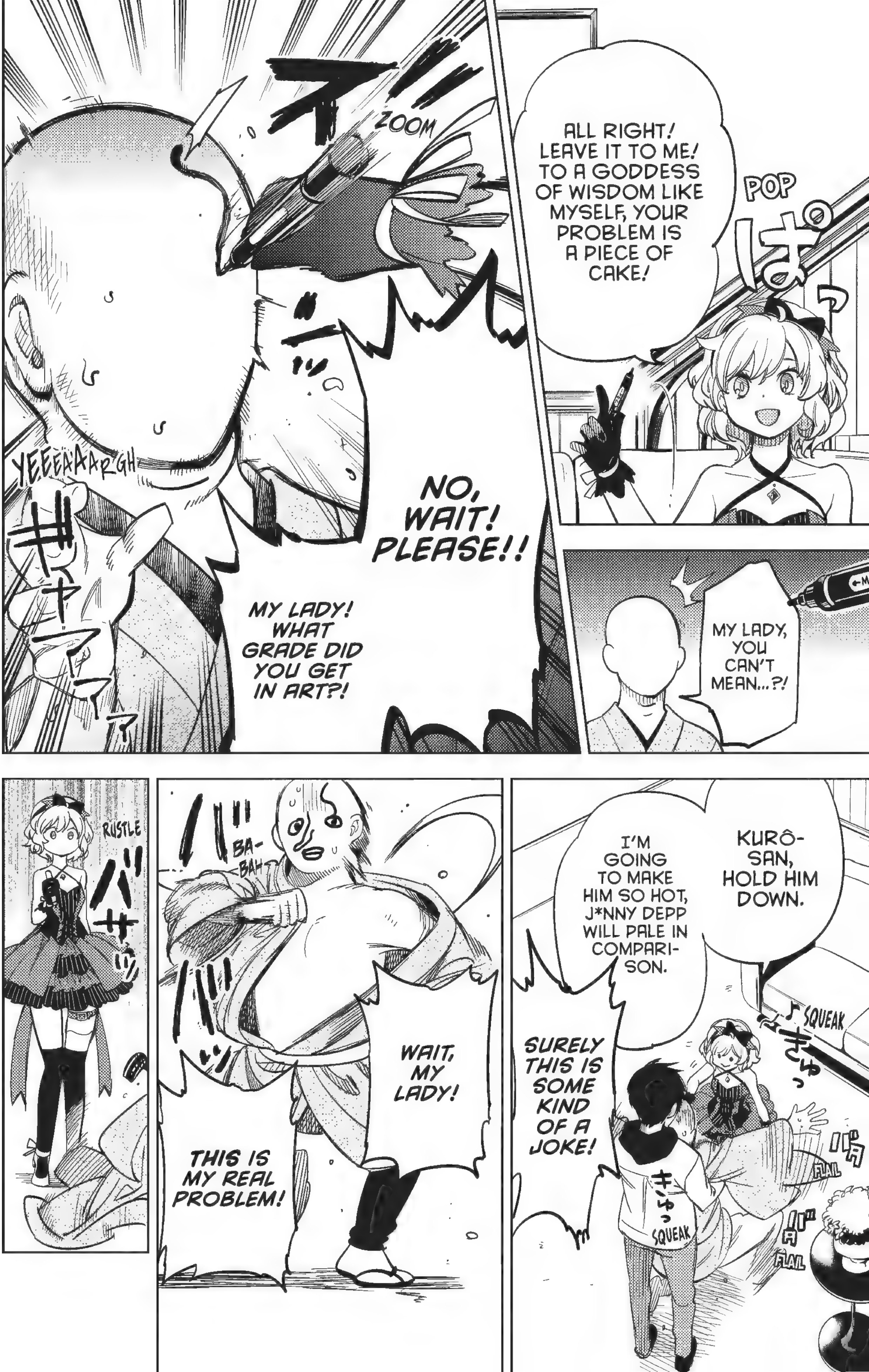

MY GIRLFRIEND DUMPED ME AFTER FIVE HAPPY YEARS TOGETHER.
ずーん
GLOOM
I'M HEART-BROKEN.
UNIVERSITY STUDENT KURÔ SAKURAGAWA (22)
ぽっ
BLUSH
OH MY, MY.
WE WERE EVEN ENGAGED.
TEP, TEP TEP
とてて
SIGH...
すとん
PLOP
MY, MY.
ぽ ぽ
B-BLUSH
DEAR, DEAR!
YOU POOR THING!
BEEEAM
パァァ

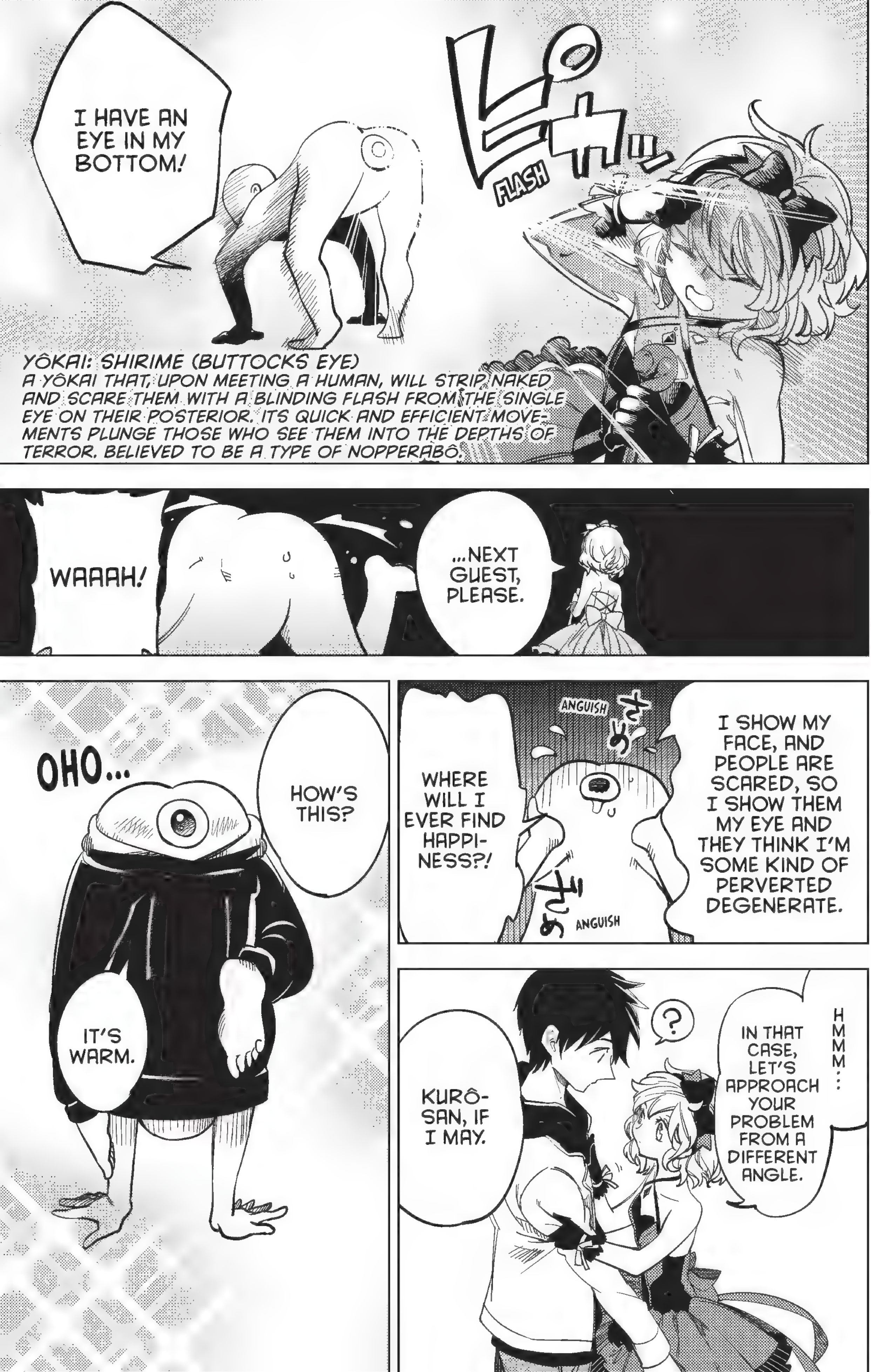

AND I RECENTLY LEARNED THAT YÔKAI HATE ME, TOO. IT KINDA HURTS, YOU KNOW?
AND WHY DO THEY HATE YOU?
I ONCE ATE SOME YÔKAI, SO MAYBE THAT'S WHY?
AND IT MADE ME IMMORTAL. IF I GET HURT, I GO RIGHT BACK TO NORMAL.
SNAP
GOODNESS ME! I'VE NEVER HAD AN IMMORTAL GUEST BEFORE!
FSH
I ATE ANOTHER YÔKAI, TOO, AND I GUESS I'VE GONE THROUGH SOME CHANGES BECAUSE OF IT.
NOW MY GIRLFRIEND THINKS I'M CREEPY, AND SHE DUMPED ME. ...IT'S JUST TOO MUCH.
WELL, YOU *DO* SNAP YOUR FINGER BONE APART AS EASILY AS IF YOU WERE DOING A PARLOR TRICK. YOU SEEM LIKE A BIT OF A HANDFUL.
IT WAS PRETTY MUCH INEVITABLE THAT SHE'D DUMP YOU.
AWW...
YOUR ONLY OPTION IS TO GET OVER HER WITH A NEW GIRLFRIEND.
AND I HAVE QUITE A PROSPECT FOR YOU.
SFF

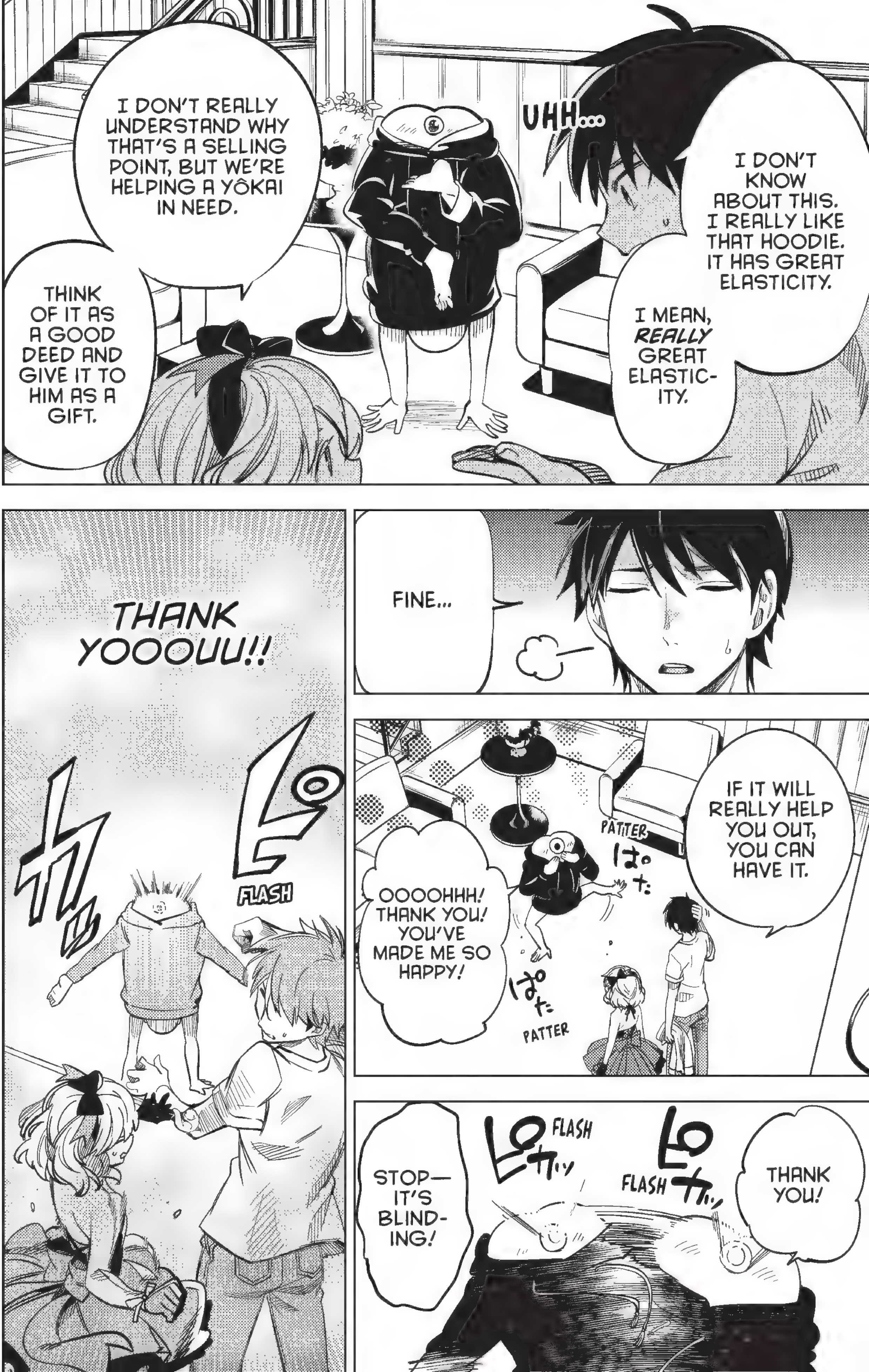

KA-POP
SHE'S PETITE AND FLUFFY, BEAUTIFUL, VERY INTELLIGENT, COMES FROM A WEALTHY FAMILY, AND SHE'S A YOUNG, VIVACIOUS HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.
HMMM...
WHY DO YOU SOUND SO UNSATISFIED?
IS THIS A SHICHI-GO-SAN PICTURE?
IT'S JUST... HER AGE.
I'm not into that...
IT'S A MARRIAGE INTERVIEW PHOTO! SHE'S 17!
IF YOU PLEASE!
I HAVE NEVER HAD SUCH A DIFFICULT CONSULTATION IN MY LIFE.
LET'S PUT THIS ONE ON THE BACK BURNER.
NEXT, PLEASE.
FLASH
BOW
MY, MY. OUR NEXT GUEST IS THIS NOPPERA-BÔ*.

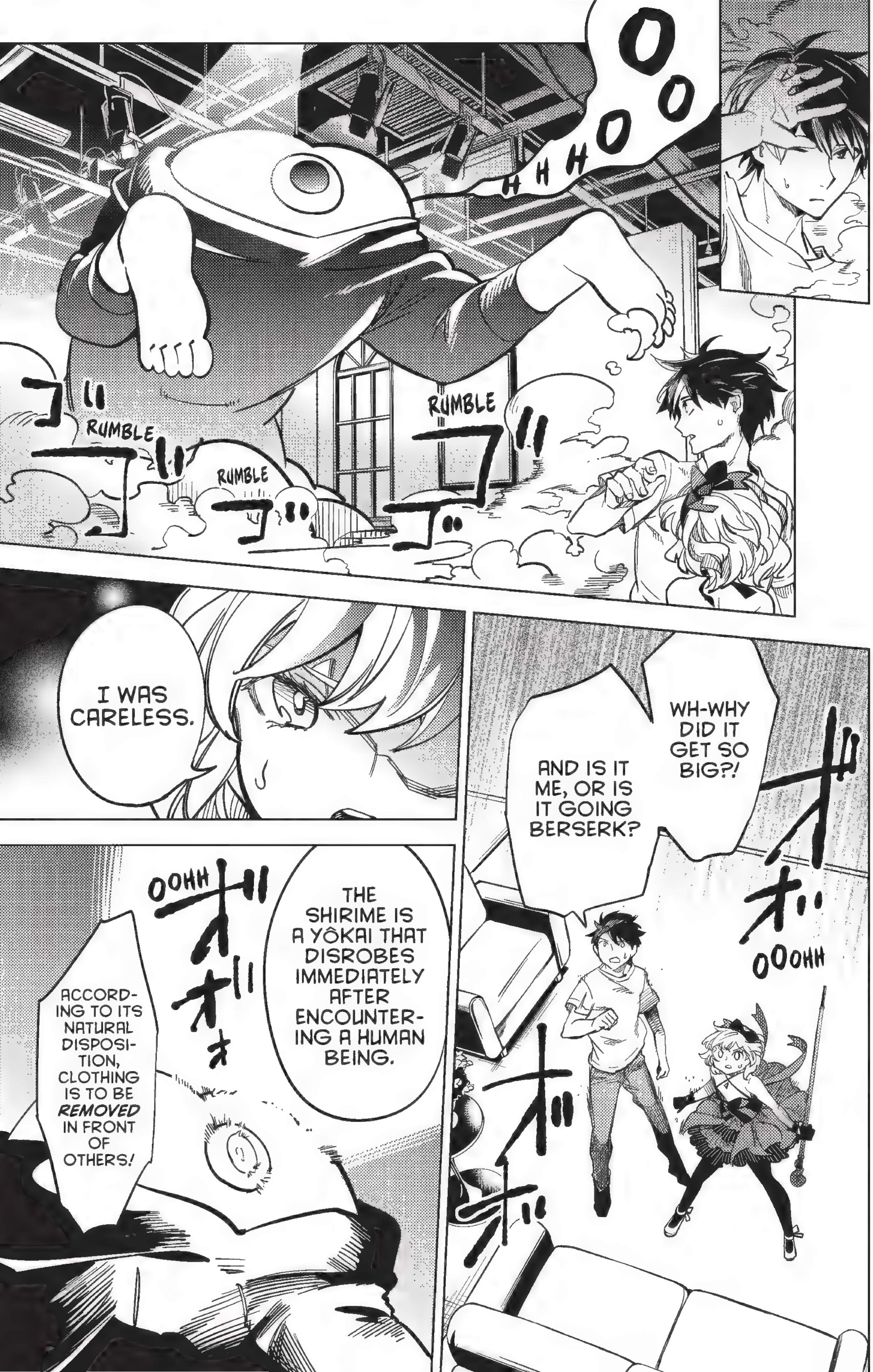
*LITERALLY, "FLAT-FACED BOY," BUT ALSO KNOWN AS A "NO FACE."

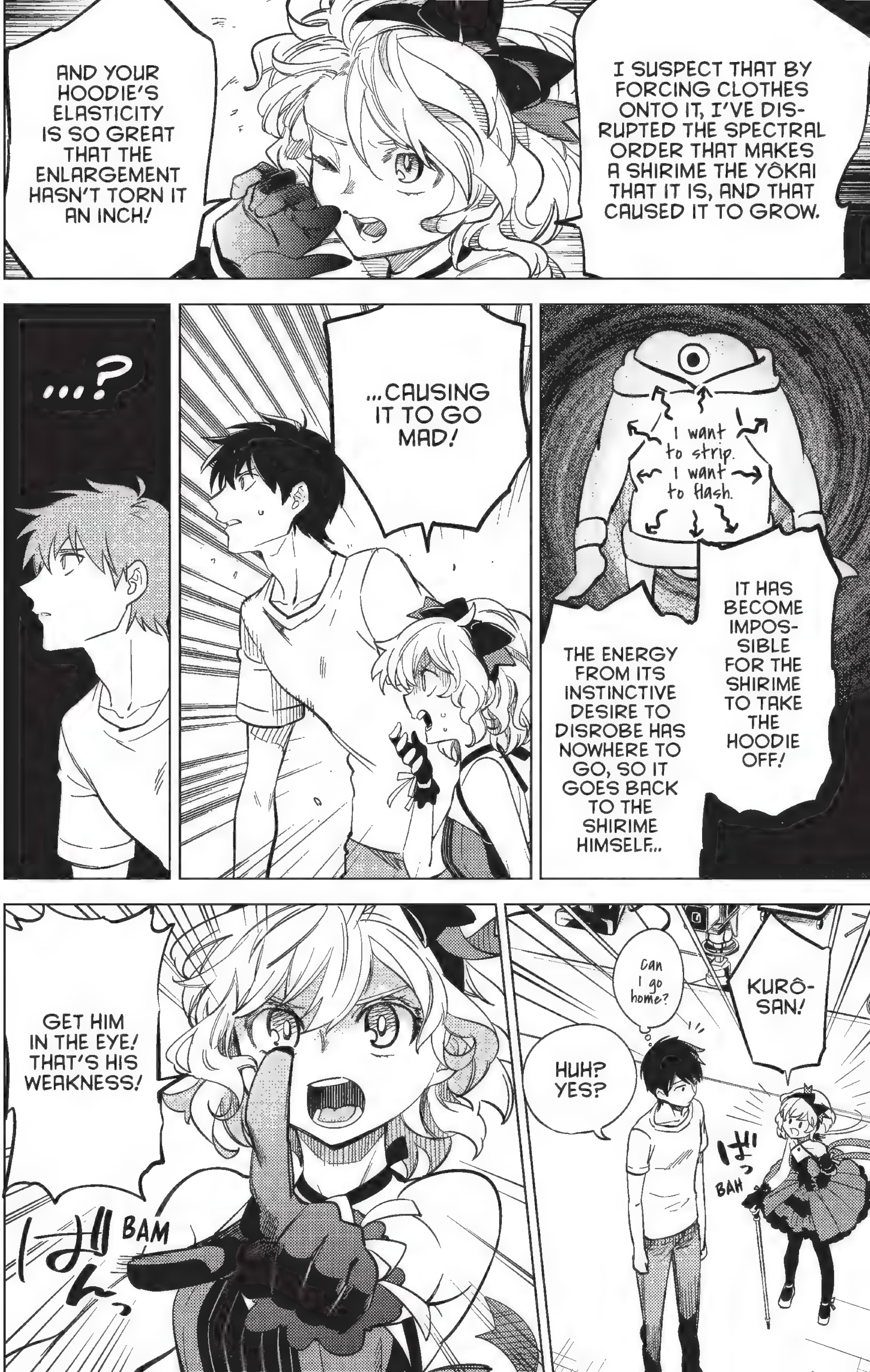

YES... I CAN HARDLY TAKE IT ANY LONGER.
THE HUMANS ARE ALL SO AFRAID OF ME... ALL I WANT IS TO BE LOVED.
SUCH A HEARTFELT PLEA.
IT *IS* RATHER TERRIFYING TO SEE SOMEONE WITHOUT A FACE, AFTER ALL.
BUT, MY LADY, THAT MAN OVER THERE IS ABSOLUTELY HORRIFYING, AND HE SAYS HE HAD A GIRLFRIEND.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT... I THINK I'M AT LEAST HOTTER THAN *HE* IS.
WHAT?!
BAH
ばっ
WHILE I'M ON THE SUBJECT, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT *EVERYONE* IS AFRAID OF YOU.
IT WOULD APPEAR THAT YÔKAI DO NOT FIND YOU VERY ATTRACTIVE, KURÔ-SAN.
DO YOU SUPPOSE IT'S BECAUSE OF THE ONES YOU ATE?
I think you're rather handsome
GLOOM
ずん…
WHEN I CAME HERE FOR ADVICE, I THOUGHT YOU WOULD SOLVE MY PROBLEM, NOT POUR SALT ON THE WOUND.

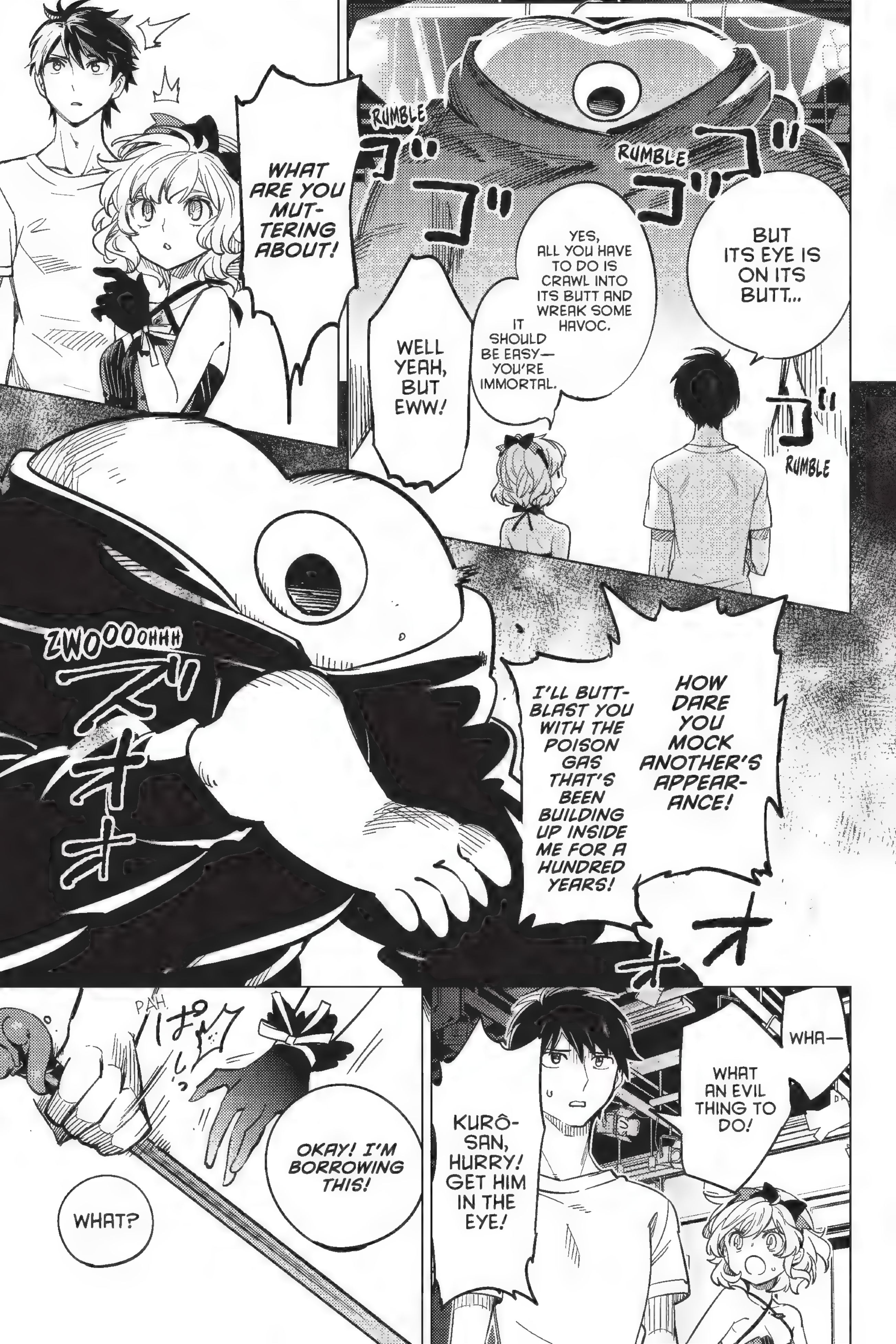

ALL RIGHT! LEAVE IT TO ME! TO A GODDESS OF WISDOM LIKE MYSELF, YOUR PROBLEM IS A PIECE OF CAKE!
POP
ぱっ
MY LADY, YOU CAN'T MEAN...?!
ZOOM
NO, WAIT! PLEASE!!
MY LADY! WHAT GRADE DID YOU GET IN ART?!
YEEEAAARGH
ギャァァァ
KURÔ-SAN, HOLD HIM DOWN.
I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM SO HOT, J*NNY DEPP WILL PALE IN COMPARISON.
SQUEAK
きゅっ
SURELY THIS IS SOME KIND OF A JOKE!
バタ
FLAIL
バタ
FLAIL
きゅっ
SQUEAK
BA-BAH
バッ
バッ
WAIT, MY LADY!
THIS IS MY REAL PROBLEM!
RUSTLE
バサッ

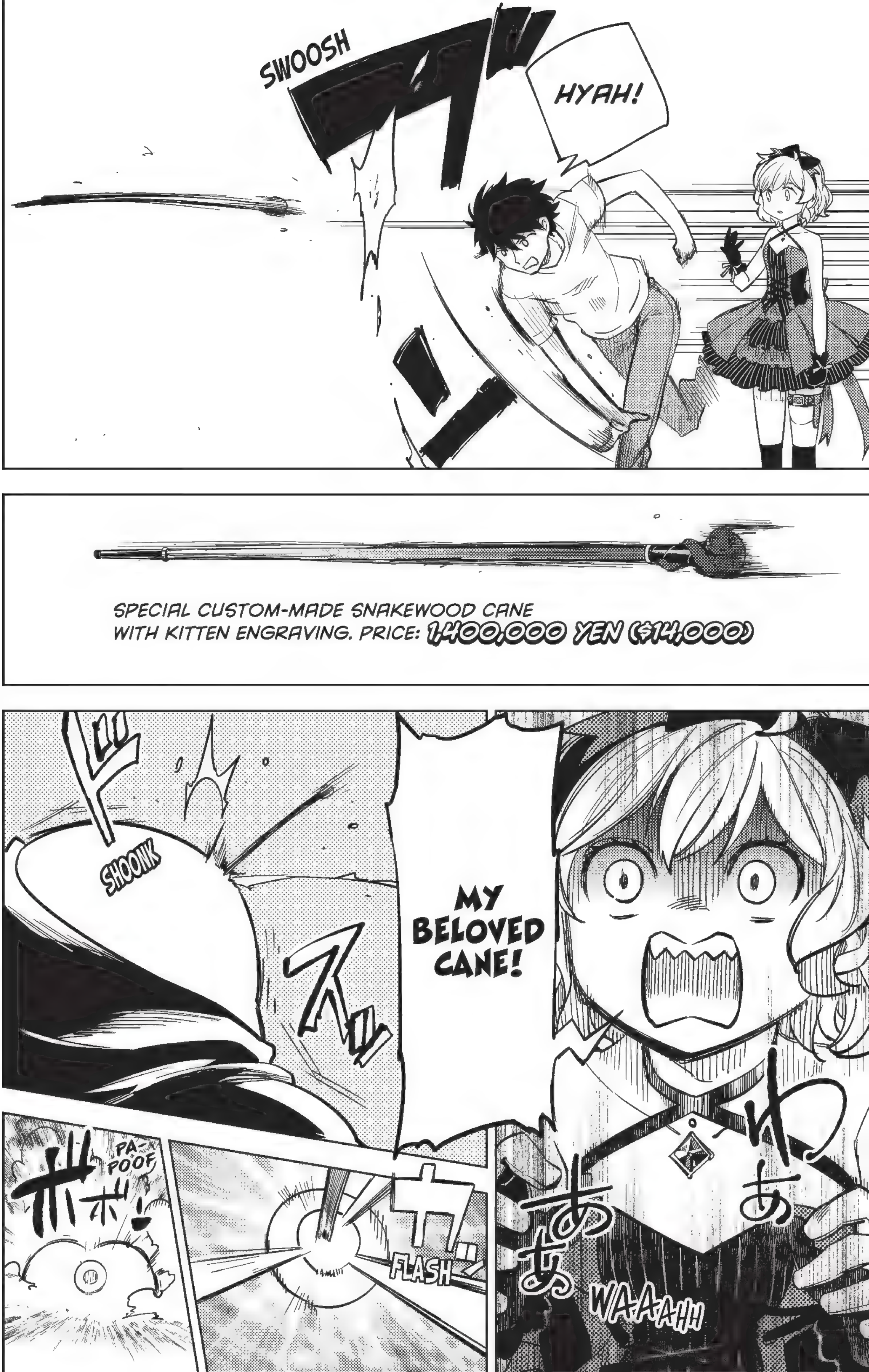

I HAVE AN EYE IN MY BOTTOM!
ピカッ
FLASH
YÔKAI: SHIRIME (BUTTOCKS EYE)
A YÔKAI THAT, UPON MEETING A HUMAN, WILL STRIP NAKED AND SCARE THEM WITH A BLINDING FLASH FROM THE SINGLE EYE ON THEIR POSTERIOR. ITS QUICK AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENTS PLUNGE THOSE WHO SEE THEM INTO THE DEPTHS OF TERROR. BELIEVED TO BE A TYPE OF NOPPERABÔ.
WAAAH!
...NEXT GUEST, PLEASE.
OHO...
HOW'S THIS?
IT'S WARM.
WHERE WILL I EVER FIND HAPPINESS?!
さめ
ANGUISH
ざめ
ANGUISH
I SHOW MY FACE, AND PEOPLE ARE SCARED, SO I SHOW THEM MY EYE AND THEY THINK I'M SOME KIND OF PERVERTED DEGENERATE.
KURÔ-SAN, IF I MAY.
?
HMMM...
IN THAT CASE, LET'S APPROACH YOUR PROBLEM FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE.

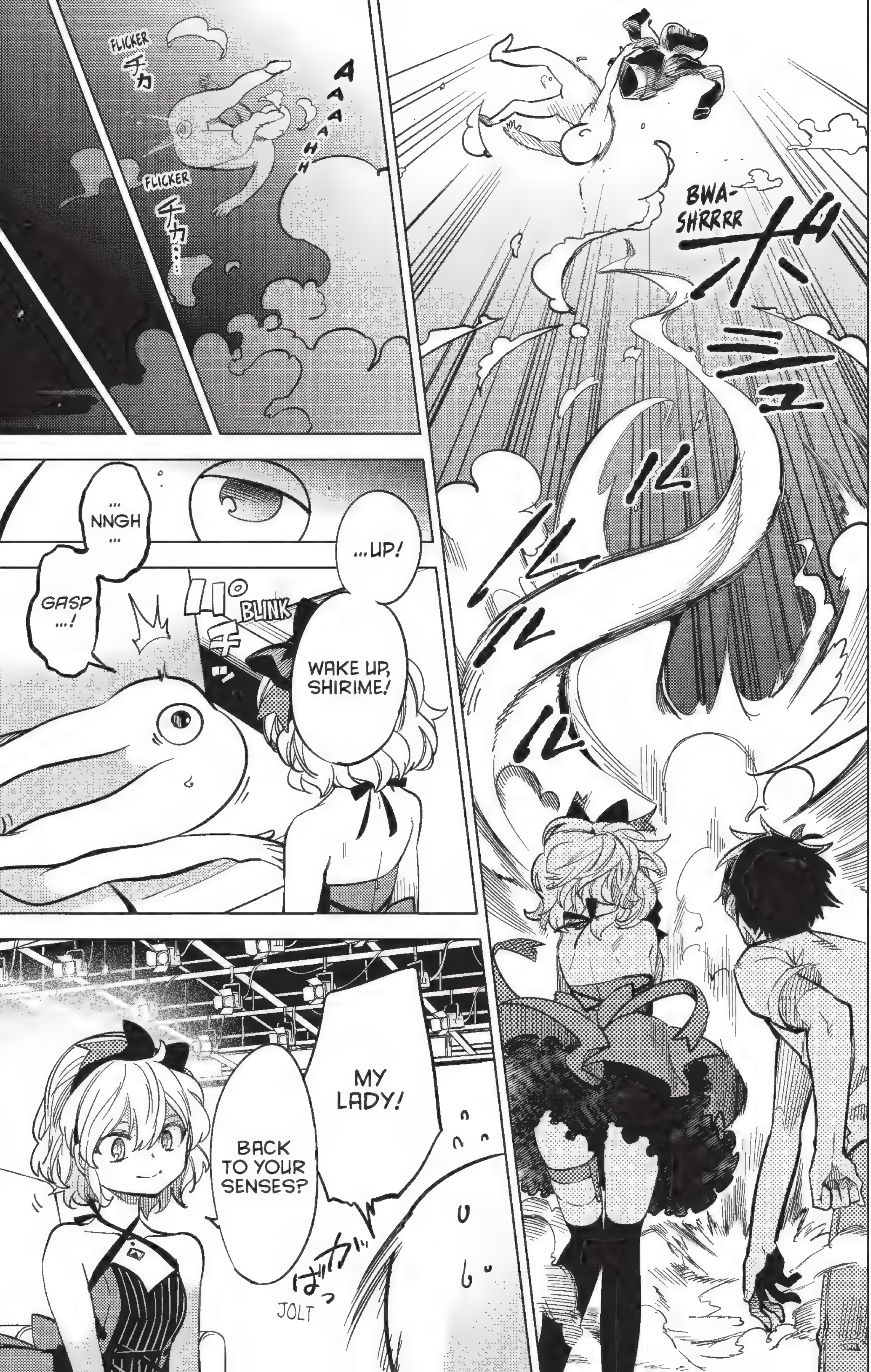

UHH...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS. I REALLY LIKE THAT HOODIE. IT HAS GREAT ELASTICITY.
I MEAN, *REALLY* GREAT ELASTICITY.
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY THAT'S A SELLING POINT, BUT WE'RE HELPING A YÔKAI IN NEED.
THINK OF IT AS A GOOD DEED AND GIVE IT TO HIM AS A GIFT.
FINE...
IF IT WILL REALLY HELP YOU OUT, YOU CAN HAVE IT.
ぱた PATTER
OOOOHHH! THANK YOU! YOU'VE MADE ME SO HAPPY!
ぱた PATTER
THANK YOU!
ピカッ FLASH
ピカッ FLASH
STOP— IT'S BLINDING!
THANK YOOOUU!!
ピカッ FLASH

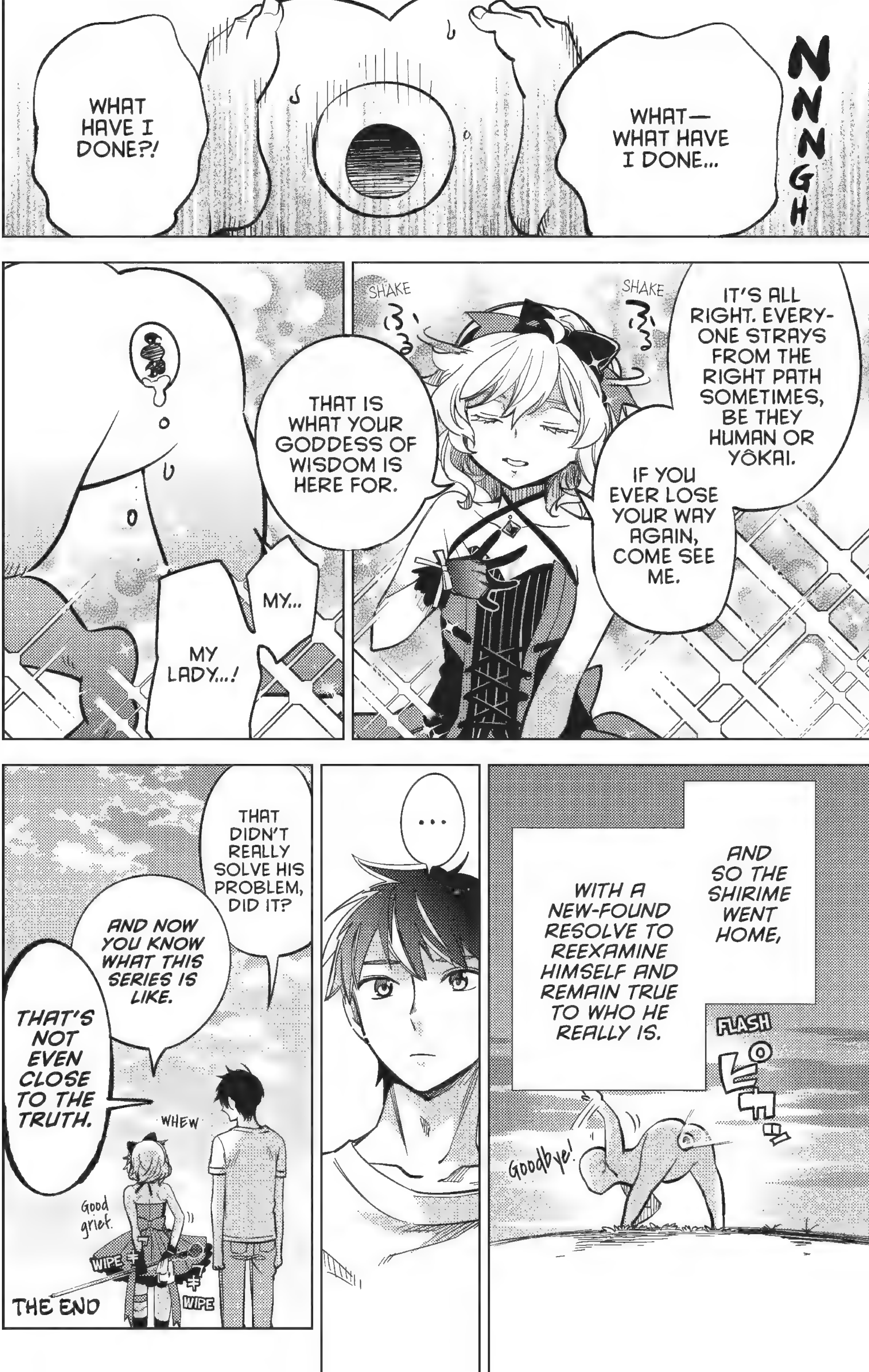

HHHOOOO
RUMBLE
ゴゴ
RUMBLE
ゴゴ
RUMBLE
ゴゴ
WH-WHY DID IT GET SO BIG?!
AND IS IT ME, OR IS IT GOING BERSERK?
I WAS CARELESS.
オォ
OOOHH
THE SHIRIME IS A YÔKAI THAT DISROBES IMMEDIATELY AFTER ENCOUNTERING A HUMAN BEING.
ACCORDING TO ITS NATURAL DISPOSITION, CLOTHING IS TO BE ***REMOVED*** IN FRONT OF OTHERS!
OOHH
オォ
オォ


I SUSPECT THAT BY FORCING CLOTHES ONTO IT, I'VE DISRUPTED THE SPECTRAL ORDER THAT MAKES A SHIRIME THE YÔKAI THAT IT IS, AND THAT CAUSED IT TO GROW.
AND YOUR HOODIE'S ELASTICITY IS SO GREAT THAT THE ENLARGEMENT HASN'T TORN IT AN INCH!
IT HAS BECOME IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE SHIRIME TO TAKE THE HOODIE OFF!
THE ENERGY FROM ITS INSTINCTIVE DESIRE TO DISROBE HAS NOWHERE TO GO, SO IT GOES BACK TO THE SHIRIME HIMSELF...
I want to strip. I want to flash.
...CAUSING IT TO GO MAD!
...?
KURÔ-SAN!
ばっ BAH
Can I go home?
HUH? YES?
GET HIM IN THE EYE! THAT'S HIS WEAKNESS!
ばん BAM


RUMBLE
RUMBLE
BUT ITS EYE IS ON ITS BUTT...
YES, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CRAWL INTO ITS BUTT AND WREAK SOME HAVOC.
IT SHOULD BE EASY—YOU'RE IMMORTAL.
WELL YEAH, BUT EWW!
RUMBLE
WHAT ARE YOU MUTTERING ABOUT!
HOW DARE YOU MOCK ANOTHER'S APPEARANCE!
I'LL BUTT-BLAST YOU WITH THE POISON GAS THAT'S BEEN BUILDING UP INSIDE ME FOR A HUNDRED YEARS!
ZWOOOOHHH
WHA—
WHAT AN EVIL THING TO DO!
KURÔ-SAN, HURRY! GET HIM IN THE EYE!
PAH
OKAY! I'M BORROWING THIS!
WHAT?


HYAH!
SWOOSH
SPECIAL CUSTOM-MADE SNAKEWOOD CANE WITH KITTEN ENGRAVING. PRICE: 1,400,000 YEN ($14,000)
MY BELOVED CANE!
WAAAHH
SHOONK
FLASH
PA-POOF


FLICKER チカ
FLICKER チカ…
AAAAHH
... NNGH ...
GASP ...!
...UP!
WAKE UP, SHIRIME!
BLINK パチ
MY LADY!
BACK TO YOUR SENSES?
JOLT がばっ
BWA-SHRRRR ザバシュ

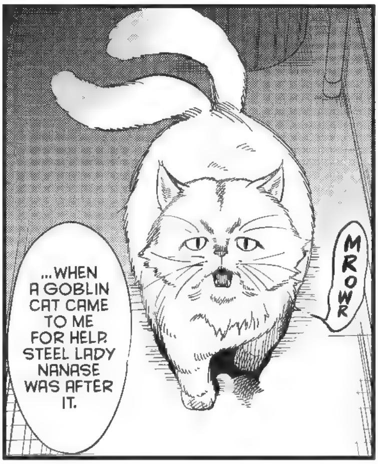

NNNGH
WHAT— WHAT HAVE I DONE...
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!
SHAKE
SHAKE
IT'S ALL RIGHT. EVERYONE STRAYS FROM THE RIGHT PATH SOMETIMES, BE THEY HUMAN OR YÔKAI.
IF YOU EVER LOSE YOUR WAY AGAIN, COME SEE ME.
THAT IS WHAT YOUR GODDESS OF WISDOM IS HERE FOR.
MY...
MY LADY...!
AND SO THE SHIRIME WENT HOME,
WITH A NEW-FOUND RESOLVE TO REEXAMINE HIMSELF AND REMAIN TRUE TO WHO HE REALLY IS.
FLASH
Goodbye!
...
THAT DIDN'T REALLY SOLVE HIS PROBLEM, DID IT?
AND NOW YOU KNOW WHAT THIS SERIES IS LIKE.
THAT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO THE TRUTH.
WHEW
Good grief.
WIPE
WIPE
THE END

About that bonus manga—I'm sorry.
I think you all know this, but Shirodaira-sensei
had nothing to do with it.
I'm sorry. I hope you'll read the next volume!

Chashiba Katase

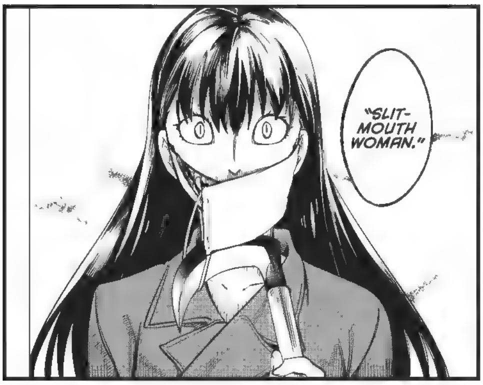
Staff: Otôtamu, Tonpu, Yamada, Yamamoto
Editors: O-kawa, T-da (honorifics excluded)

TRANSLATION NOTES


MROWR
...WHEN A GOBLIN CAT CAME TO ME FOR HELP. STEEL LADY NANASE WAS AFTER IT.

Goblin cat, page 14

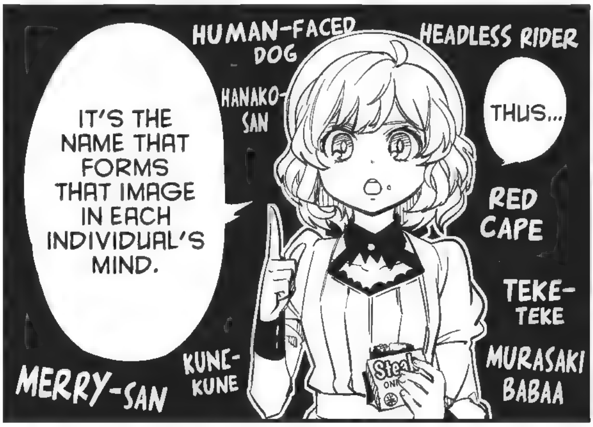
The word Kurô used in the original Japanese was *bakeneko*, or "transforming cat." You can always tell a *bakeneko* from a regular cat because it has two tails. According to Japanese folklore, when a cat lives long enough, its tail splits into two and it gains supernatural powers.


"SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN."

Slit-Mouth Woman, page 22

Slit-Mouth Woman, or *Kuchi-Saké Onna*, is an actual urban legend from Japan, very much as Kotoko described. There are variations as to her weapon of choice—here it's a sickle, but in other versions she carries a butcher's knife or scissors. If her victim tells her she's not pretty, she'll kill them, but if they say she's still pretty even with her mouth slit open, she'll slit their mouth to match.

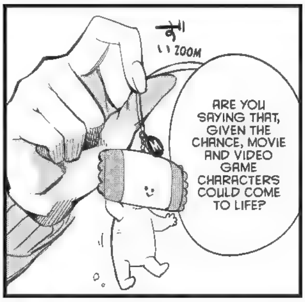
Urban legends, page 23

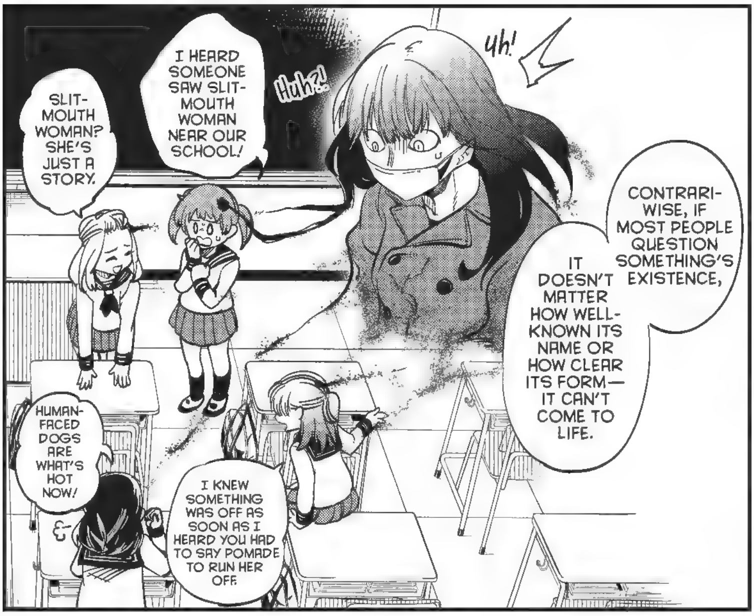

HEADLESS RIDER
HUMAN-FACED DOG
THUS...
HANAKO-SAN
IT'S THE NAME THAT FORMS THAT IMAGE IN EACH INDIVIDUAL'S MIND.
RED CAPE
TEKE-TEKE
MURASAKI BABAA
KUNE-KUNE
MERRY-SAN
Steel

As the reader may have guessed, all the names behind Kotoko belong to urban legends known across Japan. The human-faced dog is just what it sounds like—a dog with a human face that can speak words and run very fast, and is generally considered to be a bad omen. The headless rider may sound like a character from a certain popular anime or light novel, but the urban legend about a motorcycle racing down the highway with a headless rider dates from before then, and possibly comes from a 1979 movie. Red Cape, Murasaki Babaa (purple crone), and Hanako-san are all spirts that haunt public restrooms (usually at school). Teke-teke is the ghost of a woman who was cut in half when she was run over by a train, who will chase after those who encounter her by running on her elbows, dragging her torso on the ground. Kunekune is a white, fluttering object seen at the end of wide agricultural fields that drives people insane if they try too hard to make contact. And Merry-san is an abandoned doll that returns to wreak vengeance on the girl who left her.

Z.Z. Makura-chan, page 25

This is the mascot character of Makurazaka City. *Makura* can mean pillow, and so the city is represented by a character with a pillow for its head. The full name in Japanese is Gû Gû Makura-chan, where *gû* is the Japanese onomatopoeia for the sound people make when sleeping, hence the translators' rendering of Z.Z.


すい
ZOOM
ARE YOU SAYING THAT, GIVEN THE CHANCE, MOVIE AND VIDEO GAME CHARACTERS COULD COME TO LIFE?

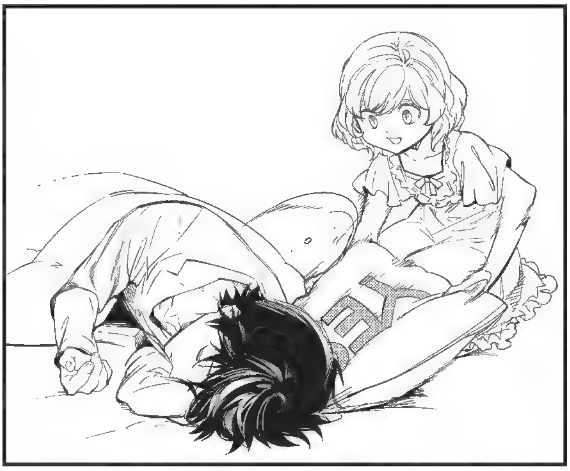

CONTRARIWISE, IF MOST PEOPLE QUESTION SOMETHING'S EXISTENCE,
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW WELL-KNOWN ITS NAME OR HOW CLEAR ITS FORM—IT CAN'T COME TO LIFE.
Uh!
Huh?!
I HEARD SOMEONE SAW SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN NEAR OUR SCHOOL!
SLIT-MOUTH WOMAN? SHE'S JUST A STORY.
I KNEW SOMETHING WAS OFF AS SOON AS I HEARD YOU HAD TO SAY POMADE TO RUN HER OFF.
HUMAN-FACED DOGS ARE WHAT'S HOT NOW!

Pomade, page 26

Pomade is a type of hair-styling product used to create the pompadour and it also describes the stereotypical hoodlum that sported the pompadour hairstyle. When the urban legend of the Slit-Mouth Woman was at its peak, rumor had it that one of the ways to drive her off was to chant the word pomade three to six times. Apparently, she hates the smell of pomade, so you could also throw actual pomade at her or even write the word on your hands and feet as a sort of ward. Other ways to deal with the Slit-Mouth Woman were to distract her with hard candy, to run away to the second or higher floor of a building, or to chant words like garlic, baldy, or dog (possibly because she hates these things).

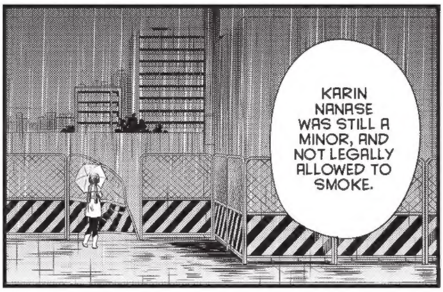
The pillow flipper, page 74

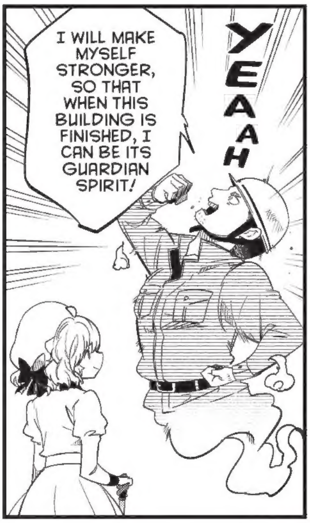
The makuragaeshi is a yôkai known for playing minor pranks in the home, specifically pillow flipping. When a sleeper wakes up and finds that his or her pillow has been moved from under their head to near their feet, they know that a makuragaeshi has been around. In this case, the pillow flipper is Kotoko, exchanging Kurô's regular old pillow for a "yes" pillow, which is used to let him know what her answer would be if he wanted to do something naughty with her.



Karin Nanase was a minor, page 91

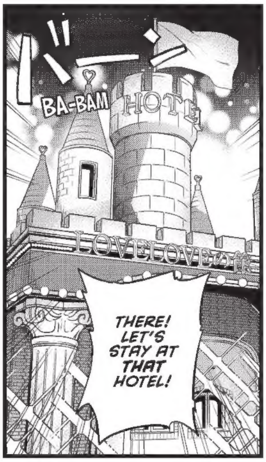
The age of majority in Japan is 20, so while Karin Nanase could legally smoke in the United States, at age 19, she is still too young in Japan.


KARIN NANASE WAS STILL A MINOR, AND NOT LEGALLY ALLOWED TO SMOKE.


YEAAAH
I WILL MAKE MYSELF STRONGER, SO THAT WHEN THIS BUILDING IS FINISHED, I CAN BE ITS GUARDIAN SPIRIT!

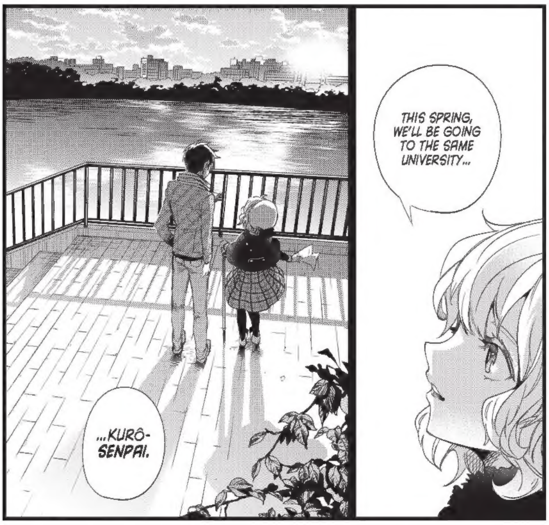
A powerless haunt, page 126

Specifically, this ghost calls himself a *jibakurei*, which means "spirit bound to the earth." This means that he's tied inseparably to the place where he died and cannot leave it.


BA-BAM
HOTEL
THERE! LET'S STAY AT THAT HOTEL!

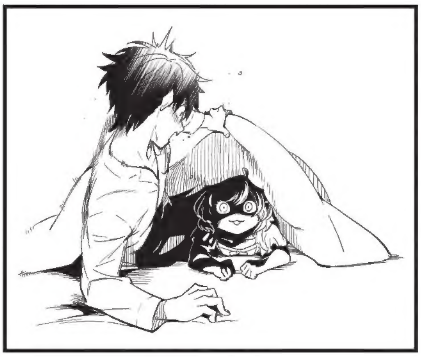
LoveLove Manor, page 133

This hotel is typical of a certain type of short-stay hotel, known as a "love hotel," which is designed to provide privacy for couples who want to be very intimate with each other, hence its appeal to Kotoko.


THIS SPRING, WE'LL BE GOING TO THE SAME UNIVERSITY...
...KURÔ-SENPAI.

Senpai, page 146

For the readers who have been patiently ignoring the translators' use of the word senpai because they're not sure what it means, hopefully this exchange has shed some light on the subject. *Senpai* literally means "companion who has gone before," and is used to refer to someone engaged in the same endeavor as the speaker, but who started it first. For example, Kurô started attending the same school as Kotoko before she did. It is also used for coworkers, or people who share a hobby. Kotoko would be excited to call Kurô senpai because it indicates a greater closeness than the more impersonal *-san*. The word for the person who started later is *kôhai*, but it isn't commonly used as a form of address.



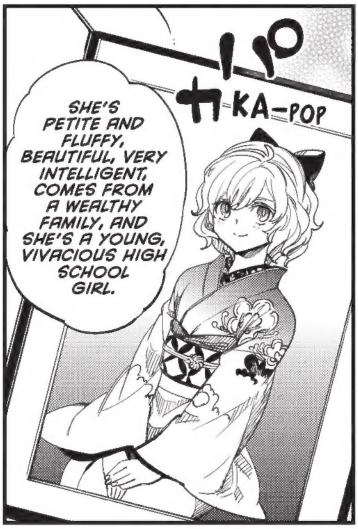
Zashiki Warashi, page 172

Meaning "room child," a zashiki warashi is a child ghost that haunts houses and brings them good fortune. They are fond of mischief and especially like to prevent people from sleeping.

Traveling Bonus Manga, page 173

In/Spectre is usually published in a manga magazine called *Shônen Magazine R*, but this particular bonus manga appeared in *Monthly Shônen Magazine*.

Shichi-Go-San picture, page 176


カパ
KA-POP
SHE'S PETITE AND FLUFFY, BEAUTIFUL, VERY INTELLIGENT, COMES FROM A WEALTHY FAMILY, AND SHE'S A YOUNG, VIVACIOUS HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.

Meaning "seven-five-three," Shichi-Go-San is a Japanese festival that celebrates children, specifically three- and seven-year-old girls, and three- and five-year-old boys. Parents dress their children in more formal attire and they visit shrines. In other words, Kurô is suggesting that Kotoko's picture looks like a seven-year-old (or three-year-old) girl. Kotoko, on the other hand, intends for this to be a *miai*, or marriage interview, photo, in which someone will dress in formal clothes to present him or herself looking their best for a prospective spouse.

In/Spectre 3

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

In/Spectre volume 3 copyright © 2016 Kyo Shirodaira/Chashiba Katase
English translation copyright © 2017 Kyo Shirodaira/Chashiba Katase

All rights reserved.

First published in Japan in 2016by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.
Electronic Publishing rights for this English edition arranged through Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC, San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682336076

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translation: Alethea Nibley & Athena Nibley
Lettering: Lys Blakeslee
Editing: Ajani Oloye
Kodansha Comics edition cover design: Phil Balsman